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No. 950
Friday
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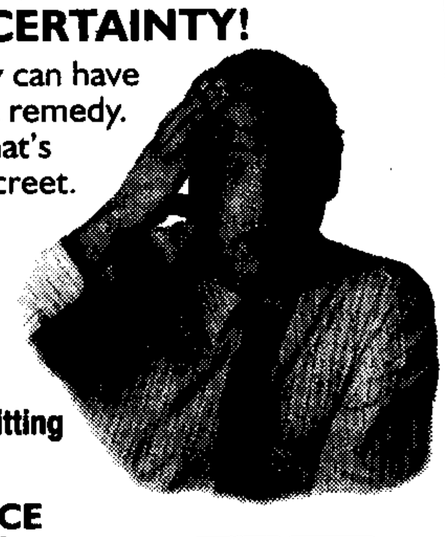

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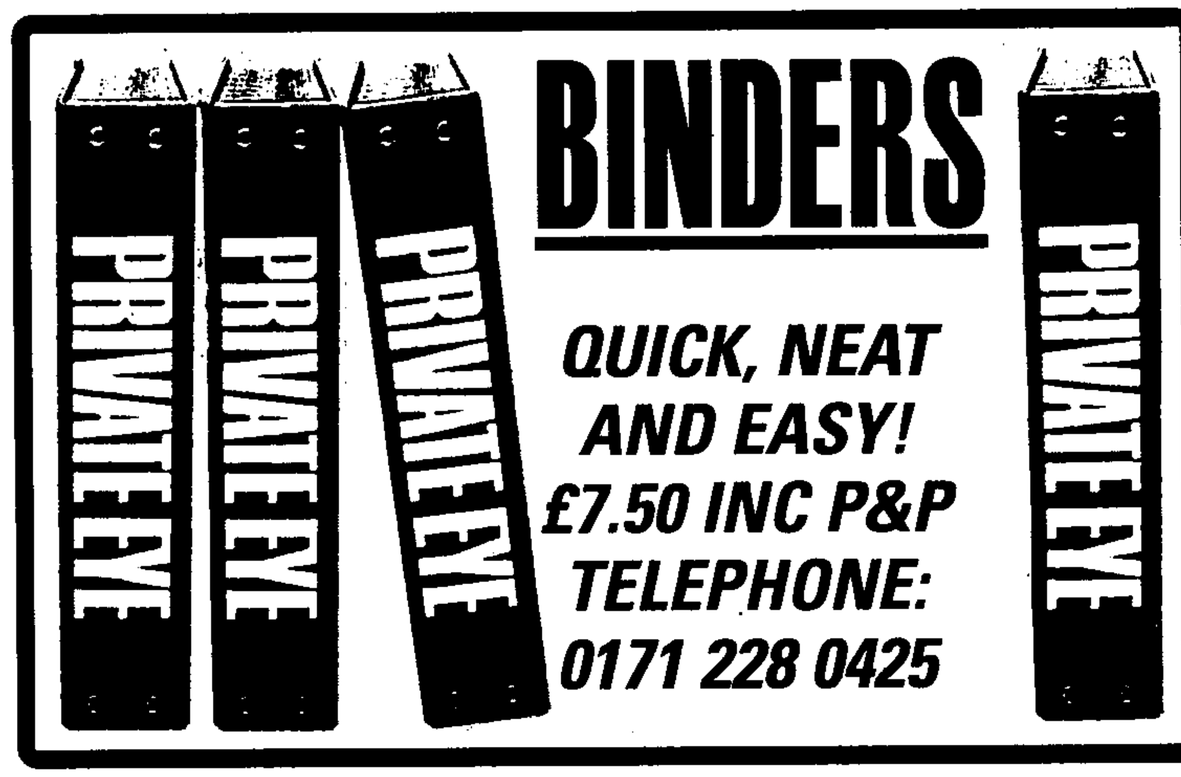

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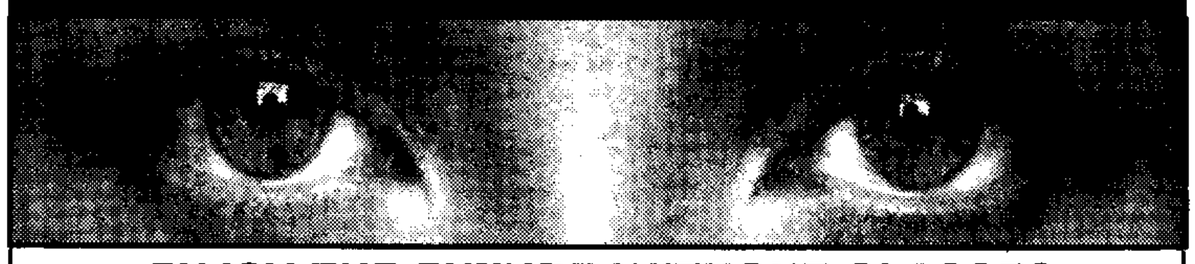

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Gnome

REPORTS that I have intervened to stop the appointment of Mr Eddie Shopsteward as political editor of the Daily Gnome are as malicious as they are true. *(Shurely 'untrue'? E.S.)*

The notion that I as a Labour peer could be influenced in making appointments by Mr Alastair Campbell would be laughable if it were not the case.

Mr Shopsteward is a journalist of immense integrity with a proven track record of causing trouble.

No one could be better fitted for the job of political editor.

But on reflection I have decided to give the job instead to Mr R. Mandelson-Slicker, author of the best-selling books *The Blair Revolution* (1996), *A Man Named Tony* (1997) and *A Tribute To Princess Tony* (1998). *(Shurely shome mishtake? E.S.)*

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PRIVATE EYE

COLOUR SECTION

Arms To Africa

UNNOTICED by the navel-gazing broadsheets, the costs of Britain's involvement in Sierra Leone are still being counted.

Contrary to the image of a clinical mercenary-led counter coup, the battle to oust the former military government was extremely bloody and led not by Sandline but several thousand Nigerian troops.

In the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown alone, between 500 and 1,000 civilians are estimated to have been killed. And in place of democracy, there is Nigerian military occupation, rural insurrection and a new wave of repression. The violence and atrocities continue in other parts of the country, as Nigeria's military ruler General Sani Abacha seeks not to restore the democracy he denies his own people, but to shore up his country's regional supremacy and give potentially troublesome commanders a chance to fill their pockets with Sierra Leone's diamonds.

Since his restoration in March, President Kabbah has been busy closing newspapers and using a drive against alleged collaborators as an excuse to lock up hundreds of his opponents. While a corrupt, ruling clique now revels in a second opportunity to loot the country, and while Sandline attempts to advertise its can-do effectiveness after its humiliation in Papua New Guinea last year, neither democracy nor Sierra Leone have benefited much from foreign secretary Robin Cook's professional ignorance.

With Cook and his deputy Tony Lloyd apparently so unhappy with the job Nigeria's khaki boys are doing at home, nor are new Labour's ethics very clear having helped Nigeria export its peculiar form of good governance and respect for human rights to its neighbours.

THE fiasco over arms sales to Sierra Leone shows how well the slick foreign and Commonwealth office (FCO) machine has chewed up foreign secretary Robin Cook and his increasingly fly-blown ethics.

A top G8 diplomat, in town last weekend for a foreign ministers' meeting, emerged genuinely shocked from consultations with his British counterparts. "None of them believe a word of the Cook agenda," he said. "They're all carrying on as though Cook didn't exist."

It is hard to draw any other conclusion from the past week's revelations, especially given the confident noises emerging from King Charles' Street itself. "We have no particular worries about this," said one very senior Africa hand, quietly confident it will be a minister, not a bureaucrat, who gets the chop.

The message from the mutinous mandarins is very different from the one fed to the *Observer* by an unnamed Labour source, who said the affair could mark the "last twitch of the Tory dinosaur in the foreign office". Fat hope. Cook is implacably opposed by serried ranks of civil servants who look back fondly to the days of Douglas Hurd and Malcolm Rifkind, smooth-speaking professionals who dutifully read their red boxes, more or less did as they were told and certainly didn't dabble in iconoclasm.

Cook may emerge wounded from this crisis, but as a betting man he knows it is an odds-on certainty that Tony Lloyd, the hapless junior minister responsible for western Africa, will bite the bullet. Lloyd's tooth-grindingly awful performance before the defence select committee helped seal his fate, especially his claim to have known nothing about the customs investigation into the affair until 1 May.

Cook then announced that Lloyd had in fact been sent a briefing paper about the probe in mid-April — and sources within the foreign office quickly let it be known that Lloyd had not persevered to the bottom of the crucial red box. Insiders variously describe Lloyd as "all at sea" and "totally out of his depth", while one very senior British diplomat, when asked what he thought of the well-meaning but ineffectual northerner, tapped the side of his head and replied: "Nothing on top."

But the Carrington-Smythes tempted to celebrate an impending reshuffle should ask themselves how someone as unpromising as Lloyd ever made it to the rank of junior minister in the first place. The foreign office is a traditional graveyard for ambitious politicians and there is hardly a long line of competent MPs waiting to replace Lloyd, let alone Cook.

THE arms-to-Africa scandal has caused a little local difficulty for Baroness Symons, the "new" Labour peer.

Before her elevation Liz Symons used to run the First Division Association, a trade union for top mandarins — and in that capacity she strenuously defended the senior civil servants who were criticised in the Scott report. It was, she argued, most unjust to blame officials for the shortcomings of their ministerial bosses.

Now, as minister of state at the foreign office, she is equally strenuous in defending Robin Cook and Tony Lloyd, implying that it is most unjust to blame ministers for the shortcomings of their officials.

New Labour, new excuses.

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"It's not a gun in my pocket and if it is I have no knowledge of it, I was never briefed on it by my officials, and certainly not on the dates you mention"

NEWS

OUT of the woodwork come Michael Howard, shadow foreign secretary, and Malcolm Rifkind, former foreign secretary, to denounce the government for not doing more to stop Sandline International's mercenary army toppling a regime in Sierra Leone.

But this is not the first time Sandline and its associates have been interfering in Sierra Leone. In early 1995, an associated company, Executive Outcomes, despatched a substantial armed force to Sierra Leone to protect the government of Valentine Strasser, the 29-year-old "leader-chairman" who had seized power in a military coup.

The Strasser regime, regarded as "friendly" to the mining companies who are keenly interested in Sierra Leone's titanium and diamonds, was threatened by the Revolutionary United Front, which was financed from Liberia and Libya. The rebel forces, which were within 30 miles of State House, were duly routed by the mercenaries. Their paymaster, Executive Outcomes, has strong connections with a company called Heritage Oil & Gas. Its object is not only to ensure "stable" regimes but also to swipe a piece of the mining action.

The same aims inspired Sandline to intervene in 1996 in Papua New Guinea. This gloriously botched operation is exposed in detail in an official Papua New Guinea government report in 1997. The Sandline forces were stopped at once by the government. Its officers, including the ridiculous commander Tim Spicer, were locked up and embarrassingly thrown out of the country — but not before they had picked up HK$1.8m for their pains. The Papua New Guinea report makes it plain that the real purpose of Sandline's intervention in the country were the contracts which might materialise from the world's biggest copper mine at Bouganville.

Though Spicer is British, and though Executive Outcomes and Heritage Oil and Gas are both registered in Britain, no action was taken by the British government to stop or even protest at these activities in Sierra Leone or Papua New Guinea. During all this time, the non-interventionist foreign secretary was Malcolm Rifkind and the home secretary was Michael Howard. If the foreign office and MI6 were indeed giving the nod and wink to a mercenary army prepared to act anywhere in the interests of mining companies, the nodding and winking long predates the Labour government.

THE lord chancellor's list of "fat cat" barristers on legal aid deals only with fees charged for defending people. An even more interesting list would be the fees earned by prosecutors.

One of the country's quaint legal customs which has survived hundreds of years of progress is the right of the attorney-general and his clerk to "nominate" the barristers they please to run the juiciest public prosecutions. Thanks to these "nominations", several barristers on the legal aid "fat cat" list supplement enormously (and confidentially) their earnings at government expense.

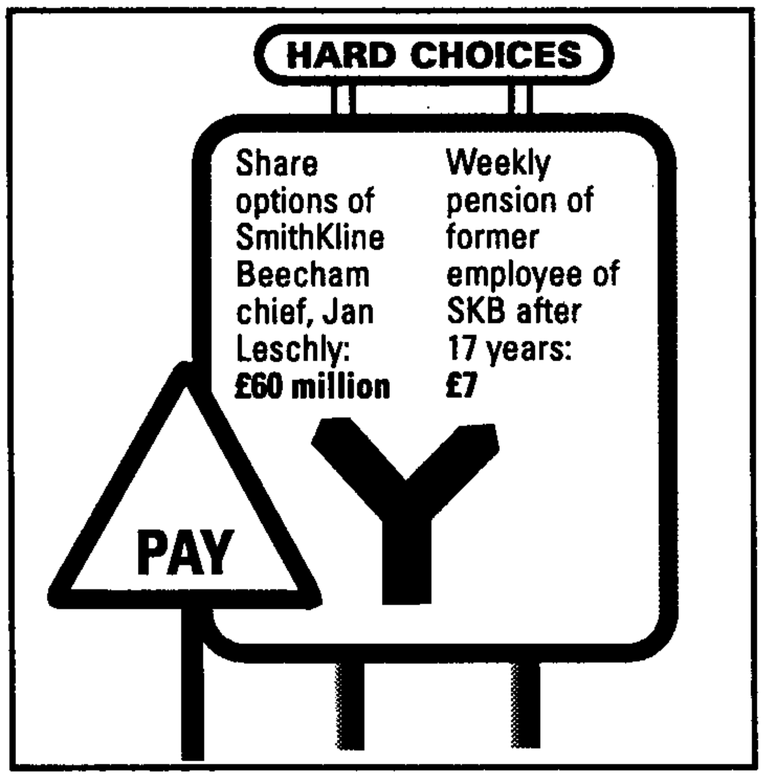
Some well-known prosecutors on the list (with their legal aid income attached) include, for instance, Anthony Arlidge QC (£450,000-£499,000), who does such a lot of prosecuting work for HM customs; Alison Ball QC (£190,000 to £229,000), who does the same for the Metropolitan police; Peter Rook QC (more than £500,000); Michael Hill QC (£450,000-£499,000); and not forgetting the *Eye*'s old friend Edmund Lawson QC (£450,000 to £499,000), who was "nominated" as counsel to the Stephen Lawrence inquiry where he is establishing his considerable reputation for being fair to police officers.

If only some impertinent MP would ask for a full list of earnings from public funds for prosecuting barristers and counsels to official tribunals of inquiry, the *Eye* could publish it.

ROCHE, the ludicrously rich multinational drugs company, is not at all flustered by the allegation that its much-prescribed anti-acne drug Roaccutane may have caused the suicide of David Tebby, 18, in South Wales.

The company and the drug are unlikely to be criticised by the Acne Support Group, which was founded in 1992 to "provide support and advice and to promote better treatment" for acne sufferers, and has 8,500 members.

On 6 March *Eye* 945 noted the Acne Support Group's enthusiasm for another anti-acne drug, Minocin, manufactured by Wyeth Laboratories, which is being sued by 150 people who claim they were crippled by Minocin. In 1997 Wyeth gave £3,000 to the support group. Not as much as Roche, who gave £5000.


HARD CHOICES
Share options of SmithKline Beecham chief, Jan Leschly: £60 million
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PAY

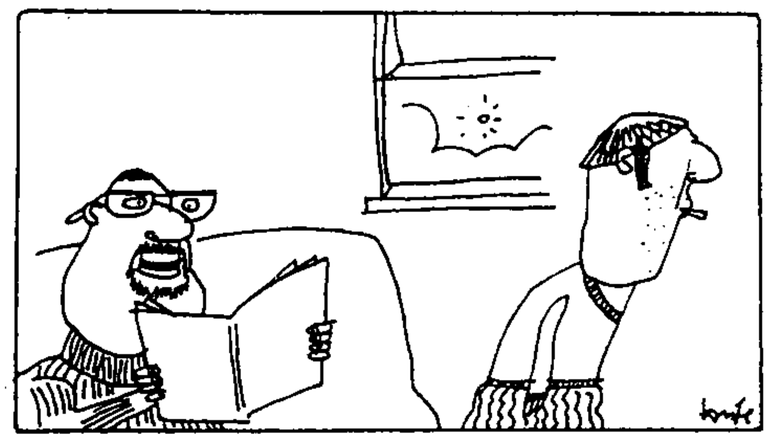
WHILE Labour promises to lick the Child Support Agency into shape, those stuck on its Kafkaesque treadmill see little cause for celebration.

Mike Farr's case began in 1995 after his former wife left him and his two-year-old daughter. The CSA contacted him on the basis that it thought he was the absent parent. He argued that he was the main carer for his daughter, but the CSA decided that as the wife received the child benefit that made her the parent with care and him the absent parent.

Over the next two years the CSA chased Mr Farr for money and the stress led to him losing his job. He was listed as owing £2,000 to his former wife. Finally in 1997 the case went before a CSA commissioner. On 28 April this year the commissioner retrospectively recognised Mr Farr as the primary carer, but would not allow him to apply for backdated maintenance from his partner. If he had wanted maintenance he should have submitted a claim, the commissioner told Mr Farr.

According to Mr Farr, the CSA refused to send him a claim form throughout the period he was classified as the absent parent so he had no opportunity to apply for maintenance. He is now considering taking the matter to appeal.

Labour's plans to make the system more simple will mean more blanket rules and even less chance of the CSA recognising complex situations like that of Mr Farr and his daughter.



"It's got everything I want in a magazine: an interview with Radiohead, thirty-six pages of fashion and a fantastic close-up of an aubergine"

Street of Shame

THE *Daily Mail* among others (11 May) was outraged at the release from prison of what it called the Balcombe Street IRA gang, and named some of the gang's victims.

However, there was no reference to the seven people killed (and at least 70 injured) in the pub bombings at Guildford and Woolwich in 1974 — bombings which the Balcombe Street gang admitted, boosting their confessions with details about the pubs which only the bombers could have known.

Could the *Mail*'s forgetfulness of these crimes have anything to do with the fact that four other young people, unconnected to any IRA unit, were convicted of the bombings long before the Balcombe Street gang were caught — and that, despite the IRA confessions, the four innocent people were kept in prison for another 13 years?

THE *Sunday Times* was tremendously excited by its "exclusive" interview with Michael Cole last weekend — even though the bouffant buffoon revealed absolutely nothing of interest. Instead, the piece was an extended puff for Cole's new PR consultancy.

Why would a newspaper waste space on this drivel? Simple. Last September, while he was still employed by Mohamed Fayed, Cole learned that investigative hack Tom Bower was working on a book which would expose the truth about the Phoney Pharaoh. Noticing that Bower's previous books have been serialised in the *Sunday Times*, Cole hastily tried to sabotage him by offering *ST* editor John Witherow the serial rights to an "authorised" book about Fayed by one Mark Hollingsworth. Witherow, excited by the prospect of publishing Fayed's exclusive thoughts on Diana, Dodi, Neil Hamilton etc, promptly signed a contract worth £100,000.

Hollingsworth was then sent to Fayed's house in St Tropez to write the book, and paid a special bonus for finishing it by Easter. Last week's interview with Cole was thus the first shot in a promotional campaign which will culminate in several long excerpts from Hollingsworth's hagiography.

Or will it? Since Witherow bought the Fayed story, the Harrods boss has given long interviews to the *Mirror*, thus spoiling the *Sunday Times*'s "exclusive". Worse still, it seems Fayed is dissatisfied with Hollingsworth's manuscript and has now asked Cole to rewrite in even more syrupy and sycophantic style — thus removing the last vestige of newsworthiness.

But the biggest problem is that Hollingsworth still has no publisher, since reputable publishing houses realise that his brown-nose job will be instantly discredited by Bower's magnum opus. If the *Sunday Times* goes ahead regardless, it will be in the strange position of "serialising" a book that doesn't exist.

One solution would be for Fayed to pay the *ST* £100,000 rather than vice versa. This, after all, is how vanity publishing usually works.

REMEMBERING he had to inform former *Express* proprietor and shareholder Lord Stevens of his decision to fire editor Richard Addis, the pale pink press baron *Lord (non-alco)* Hollick phoned Stevens with the sad news.

Stevens' pleasant lunch immediately became a grim ordeal: sitting on the other side of the table was, er, Richard Addis.

AFTER ballsing up his introduction to new *Express* editor Rosie Boycott — whom he confused with her PR woman — columnist Peter Oborne has now pulled off the double.

In the *Sunday Express* office last week he launched into a conversation with a smartly-suited woman about the arrival of a television crew. She gave him a puzzled look.

"Well, you are the PR woman, aren't you?" Oborne asked.

"No," replied Amanda Platell, newly appointed editor of the *Sunday Express*. "I'm your boss."

DOMINIC LAWSON, unpopular editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, has been giving stern instructions to his journalists to hand over *any* diary story they might have to Mark Inglefield's Mandrake diary. He warns them that anyone caught giving stories to other papers will be sacked.

Disgruntled hacks wonder if this ruling applies to Lawson himself — he who has leaked at least two extremely juicy stories to the *Daily Mirror*. Both items were Diana-related and might conceivably have made a bit of a stir in his own paper. One was the tale about Mishcon de Raya charging fees for work on the memorial fund; and the other was the Diana's-Godchildren-Given-A-Raw-Deal-In-Her-Will shock. Both appeared not in the *Sunday Torygraph* or even in its sister paper the *Daily Hellograph*, but in Piers Moron's *Daily Mirror*.

Snooping *Telegraph* staff stumbled on the truth of this when they read a "thank you" letter from Piers to Dominic while Lawson was on one of his many holidays.

TO ADD insult to the injury inflicted on the 70-plus hacks and production staff the Mirror Group has made redundant on the *Sporting Life* in the past year, the management has now offered them a "special souvenir" of the final issue of the paper (which was published continuously for 140 years until David "Rommel" Montgomery engineered its demise), complete with a note from its disastrous last-ever editor, Tom Clarke.

Meanwhile, the Mirror Group's advertisement for the launch of the new (ie exactly the same) *Racing Post* shows the same sensitive touch. It is a photo of four variously fat, balding, middle-aged journalists standing on some starting-stalls — under the cheerful headline "We're Off!"

NOT only is Nigel Pratt-Dumpster the World's Worst Diarist — he is also the World's Worst Racing Tipster.

In October Dumpster told *Racing Post* readers they should keep an eye on one of his "horses to follow" for the National Hunt season — Aardwolf, owned by his wife Lady Camilla and trained by old Etonian Charlie Brooks.

In February, *Eye* 943 reported on the nag's dismal subsequent record of falls, unseated jockeys and refused fences. But things seemed to be looking up when Dumpster reported in his *Mail* column on 27 April: "With just one fence to go, and under a brilliant ride from Graham Bradley... Diary star Aardwolf was motoring in the Whitbread Gold Cup on Saturday with a place in his sights — when he deposited Brad at the last."

Motoring with a place in his sights; eh? The *Racing Post*'s reporter put it slightly differently in a race summary: "Aardwolf... 7th and no chance when blundered and unseated rider [at the] last."

CONDE NAST md Nicholas Coleridge is seriously worried about James Brown, superlad editor of *GQ*.

Latest figures show a dive in sales with arch-rival *Esquire* overtaking *GQ* for the first time. Brown's relentless dumbing-down, moreover, has driven advertisers like Hermès, Krizia and Cerrutti to move their megabuck campaigns to *Esquire*.

Can this be linked to the wholesale desertion of former *GQ* staff to *Esquire*? Steven "Dome" Bayley is now an *Esquire* columnist, and Louisa Buck jumped ship after a *GQ* staffer asked her to send in examples of her writing (she has only been the mag's art critic for the last five years).

No doubt the rumour that Coleridge has interviewed the *Evening Standard*'s Alex Renton for Brown's job is inaccurate, however, for Brown would be very expensive to dump. If Condé Nast sacks him within two years it has to pay him a further two years' salary. This would at least make the gushing press releases on his appointment accurate: Brown was hyped as the man who would take *GQ* to the 250,000 mark. But then Condé Nast meant readers — not golden handshakes.

FOCUS ON THE INDEPENDENT

WHEN Tony O'Reilly took control of the *Indie*, hacks were so delighted to escape the clutches of David "Rommel" Montgomery they hailed the new owner as a saviour who would end the cycle of cost-cutting, redundancies and falling sales.

But in Dublin, where O'Reilly's modus operandi is better understood, there was no such false optimism. Long and often costly experience of his activities meant that Irish traders briskly slashed the share price of O'Reilly's holding company, Independent Newspapers plc.

Wherever O'Reilly has been, his sophisticated management technique tends to be the same: sacking lots of people. For example, his involvement with the Waterford-Wedgwood crafts group was designed to demonstrate his creative flair: but instead he's simply dumped staff galore, moved part of the crystal production to Eastern Europe and issued a lot of press releases. Coincidentally, the day before the *Indie* takeover went through, Waterford's annual results were announced together with O'Reilly's brilliant plan for the year ahead — 250 more redundancies and increased dividends. The share price fell at once.

His Heinz earnings (see *Eyes passim*) allowed O'Reilly to become a press baron, starting with a stake in the Dublin group Independent Newspapers plc. Over the years it has gained the sort of stranglehold over its home market Rupert Murdoch can only dream of.

Journalists on the *Irish Independent* produce incredible quantities of copy on a shoestring. At one stage sub-editors were openly cutting cartoons, graphics and even entire news-stories from UK papers such as the *Telegraph* and *Mail*, and simply pasting them down in O'Reilly's Irish papers — until the London high court put a stop to it by granting injunctions for copyright theft. Outright plagiarism has now been abandoned in favour of buying in acres of syndicated material and paying freelances to rewrite British features.

Now that he's bought the *Indie* newspapers in London, O'Reilly still has much to learn about motivating staff. Introducing new *Indie* editor Simon Kelner to the galley-slaves at Canary Wharf last week, O'Reilly's sidekick Brendan "Hail Mary" Hopkins began by haranguing hacks for their "lack of professionalism" and "lack of loyalty". This did wonders for morale — especially since these supposedly disloyal and unprofessional scribes had been rallying round, in the absence of an editor, to keep the paper coming out for the previous four days.

Hopkins' rant enraged the *Indie*'s man in Washington, Yorkshire Ripper lookalike John Carlin, who penned Hopkins a furious memo pointing out that O'Reilly, while a 46 percent shareholder in partnership with the Mirror Group, had done nothing to save the *Indie* from David Montgomery's brutal cost-cutting excesses. "Your criticisms might have been more valid," wrote Carlin, "if you and the organisation you represent had not sat blithely by over the past four years as the Mirror Group set about the decimation of a once-great newspaper... Worst of all... has been your policy of cutting staff numbers way below the minimum required to produce a competent, sound and serious newspaper. The wonder is that the newspaper comes out at all. On the other hand, to accuse *you* of 'lack of professionalism' in your handling of the newspaper's affairs would be grossly to overstate the measure of your involvement. 'Supine neglect,' I suggest, would be a better way to characterise your role..."

Newspapers, as any fool knows, sell on news. But O'Reilly seems to regard reporting as a luxury he can do without, preferring to rely on a handful of armchair columnists who can fill huge amounts of space at a fixed (if high) cost. His first instruction to new editor Kelner was to poach Matthew Parris from the *Times*. "If we have to pay £300,000 to get him, do it," he advised. No doubt yet more hacks will be made redundant to cover the cost.

Is it any wonder Messrs Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black are looking so pleased with themselves?

PS: Kelner's appointment depressed female staff. The pudgy former sports hack has a boozy, laddish reputation somewhat inconsistent with O'Reilly's high-minded intention, as passed down by former editor-in-chief Andrew Marr [*Who he? Ed*], to turn the *Indie* into "a sort of white *FT*".

Kelner's nickname — "Pussy" — derives from the days in 1992 when he got the editorship of the *Observer* magazine, which he and his cronies described as being "wall-to-wall pussy".

***TELEGRAPH* proprietor Conrad Black is furious about a faux pas he unwittingly committed against his daily paper's features editor, Eleanor Mills.**

Black had asked *Torygraph* editor Charles Moore to find him a woman to make up the numbers at a dinner party. Mills was plucked from the newsroom and sent to Black's house, all aglow at her good fortune.

When she arrived, however, her Canadian boss drew her to one side and told her a male guest had dropped out and that she was no longer needed to make up the numbers. Comprehensively crushed, Mills was led through the kitchen and out the tradesmen's entrance.

What the snobbish Black hadn't realised was that Mills is no ordinary newsroom drudge. Daddy is David Mills, high-powered lawyer to Silvio Berlusconi and best remembered for his prominence at the time of the Formula One/Labour party row over tobacco sponsorship. Not only that, but stepmum is Tessa Jowell, Blair's health minister.

If only Black had known of his employee's connections before he made her creep out through the servants' quarters.

INSIGHTS INTO MARY BELL, No 94

We all did unspeakable things aged 11, and would not expect to be judged by them 30 years later.

— Decca Aitkenhead, the *Guardian*, 30 April.

EDWARD PEARCE, the notoriously rude parliamentary sketch writer at the *Express* [*Not for much longer! RB*], has so riled the rag's copytakers with his arrogance over the years that their noticeboard is adorned with a large, blown-up photostat of the hack's unprepossessing visage.

This is used during breaks for darts practice, the bullseye being the Pearce hooter. The copytakers, who will themselves be out of work later in the summer when the national newspapers' new centralised copytaking service, PA CopyDirect, comes on stream, are all eagerly awaiting their promised leaving present from one spirited colleague — a wax effigy of Ed Pearce and a pin.

"I suspect Miss Scarlet's parents were responsible"

THE signs are that the Blair government's commitment to Cool Britannia is affecting its commitment to traditional music.

In a so far unrecorded part of the animated conversation between the Prince of Wales and Peter "Mandy" Mandelson, the Prince of Spin, when they met earlier this year at Sandringham, Mandy urged the prince to reconsider his patronage of the Philharmonia Orchestra and the English Chamber Orchestra (Charles is official patron to both).

"I don't know why you are supporting these orchestras," said Mandy, "because we don't intend to put any money into classical music".

QUOTE TO REMEMBER: "My driver likes Melody FM; I prefer Classic FM. But we don't fight." (Peter Mandelson, *Guardian*, 11 May.)

LABOUR's "new deal" got off to a cracking start in Sheffield, where Michael Ellis was the first unemployed person in the country to be placed in the construction industry under the scheme.

After six weeks he was kicked out of his job by Henry Boot, the Sheffield-based building firm. Ellis complained that the training was "virtually non-existent" and that "I was told that I would be properly trained but I was just left on my own for most of the time".

Henry Boot sacked another New Dealer after only two weeks.

THE row at British Biotech has brought down another champion of Cool Britannia.

Last November, when chancellor Gordon Brown was looking for a suitable New Brit millionaire to chair his high-flying working group on the financing of high tech companies, he fell upon just the man: Keith McCullagh, chief executive of British Biotech.

McCullagh admirably fulfilled the two qualifications for "new" Labour potentates. He was an instinctive Tory who had befriended Tory ministers, and he was very rich. To prove the point, Mr McCullagh celebrated his new appointment by announcing a 50 percent salary increase at British Biotech, bringing him up to £300,000 a year, plus a bonus of £100,000. The news of the increase hit the streets on the day Brown issued his appeal for wage restraint in his green budget.

When the *Eye* rang the treasury on 11 May to confirm this appointment, a spokesman rather sorrowfully announced that Mr McCullagh "has asked the chancellor to be relieved of his appointment as chairman of the committee". Asked if this had anything to do with recent press references to coincidences between flattering British Biotech press releases about wonder drugs and the buying and selling of directors' shares, the treasury spokesman said: "We are not saying anything — neither is he."

THIS week the Neill inquiry into party funding tiptoes its way round an ethical minefield.

Up before the inquisition we have Lord Levy, the former bagman for the blind trust that finances Tony Blair's private office. Did donors expect or receive a discreetly appreciative wink, as alleged by Henry Drucker, another former Labour fundraiser? What could have prompted Sir Emmanuel Kaye, long known as a rightwinger and Eurosceptic, to shell out for "new" Labour? And what do we make of Lord Levy's own peerage?

Through the years of opposition Labour tartly pointed out each "coincidence" when an industrialist who had contributed to Tory funds just happened to find himself on the next honours list. No one would suggest that Lord Levy had in any comparable way "purchased" his own elevation; that would be entirely wrong. As a pop-music publisher he has every right to recognition for the tunefulness of his contributions to Cool Britannia, never mind the political services.

But would it make it any more ethical if he owed his ermine, however remotely or indirectly, to other people's money? The Neill inquiry will, no doubt, give us all the answers.

THE last *Eye* revealed that lobby company Westminster Strategy had successfully lobbied the Labour government on behalf of its client SEMA, which recently won the contract to run the Benefits Agency Medical Services.

Any suggestion that Westminster Strategy's success was due to its policy of recruiting ex-Labour party staff is wrong, however. The lobbying firm is a member of the Institute of Business Ethics, an upright body dedicated to high moral standards and sanctified by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other clerics.

Other highly moral firms belonging to the Institute include BUPA, arms manufacturer GKN, Nuclear generators Magnox, Nestlé (the company so helpfully providing powdered baby milk to the Third World) and BICC (so helpful in building the Pergau Dam).

Meanwhile SEMA is tendering for Operation Quantum to run the prison service's administration. When the last government was investigating this privatisation it commissioned a consortium based around SEMA to carry out a feasibility study. Now SEMA is chasing a contract based on a specification drawn up by...SEMA.

LABOUR MPs are agog at new attempts to gag them. There are plans afoot to create a panel, similar to those that "weeded" council candidates, to vet those hoping to stand in next year's elections for the European and Scottish parliaments for signs of "troublemaking" or "dufferism".

Labour's NEC will appoint a panel which would "recommend suitable candidates" to individual Labour parties. Those who have a record of voting against the government or droning on about unions or socialism need not apply. While the Millbank control freaks are unlikely to pick on big cheeses such as Dennis Skinner, lesser fry such as Jeremy Corbyn and Alan Simpson are likely to go under the cosh. New Labour appears to be taking Jack Straw's winning slogan "one strike and you're f*****g out" to heart.

Number crunching

■ The Maastricht Treaty stipulates that the national debt of any state joining the Euro should not exceed

60%

of that state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

■ Belgium's national debt expressed as a percentage of its GDP is

120% as is Italy's.

Both are joining the Euro.

MEANWHILE in Scotland the Blairite hoping to succeed as the party's general secretary, Andrew Kerr, had his hopes cruelly dashed by Gordon Brown's chums who instead opted for Fife council leader Alex Rowley.

At least Kerr has a job to go back to: he presides over Glasgow council's waste disposal unit, which many old Lefties may soon become sadly familiar with.

WHILE Labour has insisted it will rule the roost in the new Scottish parliament, Scottish secretary Donald Dewar's desire to become head lad could come unstuck: one poll gives the Scottish Nationalists a five-point lead over Labour.

Tony Blair has responded by appointing a raft of "advisers" whose orders are to turn round this embarrassing deficit. But the elevation of Paul McKinney to the post of Scottish campaign director has simply given the SNP even more ammunition. At the last general election, McKinney voted... er, SNP.

While senior Blairites try to gild the lily, whining that "Mr McKinney had the right to follow his conscience", Labour's 1997 expulsion of Aberdeen University professor Steve Bruce springs to mind. He claims he voted for a Liberal Democrat last May to ensure the defeat of a Tory because there was no Labour candidate in his Gordon constituency. McKinney, then a member of the Govan Labour party, reportedly voted for the SNP as a protest against Mohammed Sarwar, now the Labour MP for the area.

Labour expelled Bruce and subsequently handed McKinney one of its top jobs in Scotland.

SCOTTISH Tory businessman Alistair Grant, chairman of brewers Scottish & Newcastle and board member of the Bank of Scotland, has revealed that he voted "yes" to a Scottish parliament but "no" to it having tax-raising powers.

This shouldn't come as a surprise since S&N and the Bank of Scotland were vocal in their opposition to tax-raising powers during last September's referendum. This was, in fact, a compromise since they had previously been hostile to a Scottish parliament altogether — at one point Grant had said he would move S&N's headquarters to London if fiscal devolution came about.

So why the change in stance? Obviously it was a measured political decision and had nothing to do with the sale of S&N's old headquarters to house the new Scottish parliament. One estimate prices the site at £2m.

THE reputation of Ofsted, the schools inspectorate, has received another dent following withdrawal of its report into Kingsdale School, Southwark.

Kingsdale recently failed an inspection only to be told that a copy of the report was not available as it contained too many spelling errors. Ofsted officials have confirmed that the school's governors are appealing against the decision to fail the school on the grounds that the inspectors themselves were in need of further education.

LIBERAL Democrat MP Matthew Taylor has first hand experience of "new" Labour's commitment to freedom of information.

Soon after Tony Blair took power, Taylor wrote to the president of the board of trade, Margaret Beckett, asking about controls on export licences for electric shock batons which are routinely used as instruments of torture by dictatorial regimes.

A few weeks on and the member for Truro and St Austell had still not received a reply. His office phoned the department of trade (DTI), only to be fobbed off with blather about the difficulties facing a newly elected government.

At the end of June Taylor wrote again to the DTI. No reply. His office then phoned again. This time they were told the question should not have been sent to the DTI in the first place and it was being passed on to the foreign office (FCO).

Taylor duly sent a new letter on 1 July to the FCO asking when he would have answers to his questions. No reply. After the summer recess he chased it. He was told there had been lots of confusion but he would receive a reply shortly. More weeks passed... still no reply.

The now enraged Taylor tabled a parliamentary question asking when he would get a reply to his letter. On 11 February the FCO finally replied, telling Taylor the matter was one for... Margaret Beckett, the president of the board of trade. A year on and Taylor is still waiting for answers to perfectly straightforward questions.

'Backbiter'

TALES FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Chapter 94

"HARRODS boss Mohamed Al Fayed is on the verge of winning his four-year battle for British citizenship," the *Mail on Sunday* claimed last week. "Home Secretary Jack Straw is due to make an announcement shortly."

The story was attributed to "insiders", but it didn't say whether these sources were inside the government or merely inside the ever-fertile brain of the Phoney Pharaoh. Nor did it explain how Straw could make an announcement before the crown prosecution service (CPS) decides whether to charge Fayed over the mysterious disappearance of £200,000-worth of valuables from a Harrods safe-deposit box belonging to Tiny Rowland.

While the home secretary makes his mind up, the *Eye* will try to help him by recalling the many acts of kindness that make Fayed such a manifestly suitable candidate for British citizenship: his financial probity, his unswerving allegiance to the truth, his gallantry towards the fair sex, and of course his fellow-feeling for those who, like him, belong to an ethnic minority...

Visiting the Harrods sports department in the autumn of 1992, Fayed took offence at the casual dress of some young Asian employees. He promptly ordered his security guards to "throw those Pakis out" — and, when asked why, replied: "They are Pakis and this is my store." On another occasion, while touring the food hall, he asked "Who is that black bastard picking his nose? I want him fired."

The "black bastard" wasn't alone. In 1994 Harrods instituted a "staff review" during which members of the personnel department toured the store with clipboards. By the end of the exercise at least 33 staff had been sacked, of whom at least 24 were members of ethnic minorities (mostly African or Afro-Caribbean). By 1995 just 15 percent of customer service staff at Harrods were black or Asian, as against 36 percent at Selfridges and 49 percent at Debenhams.

When Fayed acquired the company International Marine Services, of which Christoph Betterman was president, Betterman asked if he should report to the managing director of Dubai Trade and Trust, who happened to be a Sri Lankan. "Do you think I am crazy," Fayed roared, "to have you reporting to a black man?"

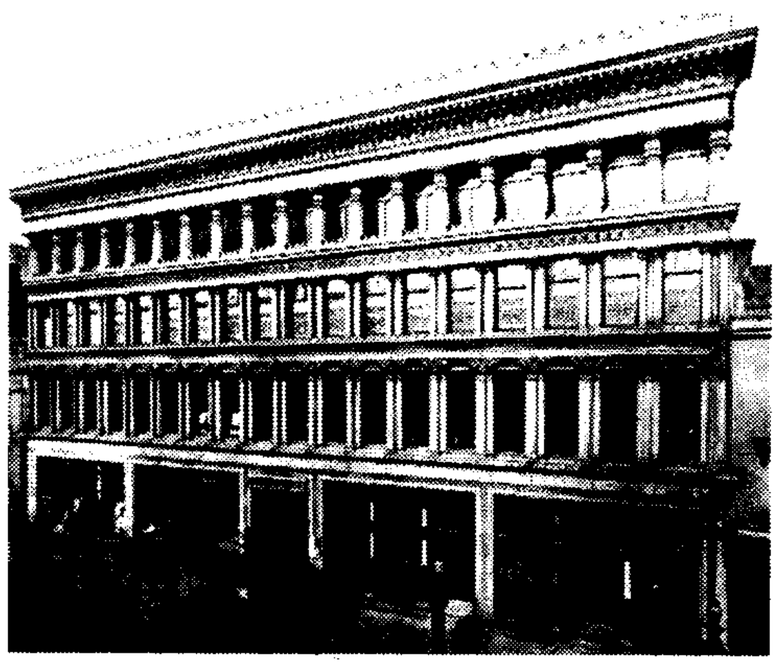
Interviewed by Bernd Dorler of *Der Spiegel* in May 1996, Fayed complained of the inconvenience of lacking a British passport, and so having to queue at the airport "among all those Pakis".

NOOKS and CORNERS

A TYPICAL tale of Glasgow, City of Architecture and Design in 1999? When discussing the threat to one of Glasgow's finest historic buildings, Egyptian Halls in Union Street, in *Eye* 947, I did not appreciate the full enormity of the situation.

Built in 1871, Egyptian Halls is the most magnificent and most extraordinary commercial building designed by Alexander "Greek" Thomson, one of the two great originals produced by the city and Scotland's greatest Vic-torian architect. Exotic and unprecedented, perhaps inspired by the apocalyptic images of John Martin, it rises in a series of rich horizonal layers to a final top storey where the windows run separately behind squat Egyptian columns which support a majestic cornice.

Behind, the structure is all of cast-iron. When it was new, one London critic wrote that it "is probably the architect's most successful effort, and we doubt if its equal, for originality, grandeur of treatment, or imposing effect, could be found in any city, not excepting the metro-polis itself".



So Egyptian Halls is a category A listed building. But that did not stop it being neglected for years by its owners: a gang of four Chinese restaurateurs who ran a business on the first floor and left the rest of the upper floors lie empty and rotting. Attempts by the planning department to get them to do something before its condition worsened to the point of no return were ignored, so in the end the city council finally did the decent thing and served a compulsory purchase order (CPO). This was confirmed by the secretary of state for Scotland. A restoration package was assembled with the tenants of the ground floor shops and a prospective user of the upper floors, which had the approval and financial support of Historic Scotland. The long overdue restoration was due to begin last March. So far, so good...

And then at the last minute an appeal against the CPO was lodged by a Mr Douglas Wu, who was one of three individuals who between them owned 50 percent of Egyptian Halls. It seemed surprising that Mr Wu should still expect a financial return on the building he had resolutely neglected, but it emerged that he was supported by Tom Dyer of Dundee, who claims a development interest. In consequence, work could not begin and the restoration has had to be postponed until this appeal can be heard — and hopefully dismissed — by the court of session. But, because of the forthcoming Piper Alpha inquiry, there is a shortage of senior Scottish judges and the case cannot be considered for at least 10 months.

This has made all concerned despair. Any financial package with the vital grant aid from Historic Scotland and other bodies may have to be renegotiated in a year's time while the prospective end-user may well get fed up with waiting. But worst of all is the danger that because Egyptian Halls is in very bad shape it might not survive another bad winter. The city's department of building control, ever zealous in eliminating yet more of Glasgow's surviving historic buildings, has already been sniffing around Thomson's masterpiece and will no doubt be looking at things closely. The situation is grim yet nothing can apparently be done.

So who is the man from Dundee who is singlehandedly endangering the future of one of Glasgow's best buildings? Well, he is a former racehorse owner and accountant who, we learn from the *Glasgow Herald* of 11 March, was recently found guilty of professional misconduct by the Institute of Chartered Accountants' disciplinary committee for cheating a bankrupt and his creditors out of £80,000. Earlier, in 1995, he was found guilty in Dundee sheriff court of assaulting a business colleague. What Mr Dyer's motives may be in sabotaging the restoration of Egyptian Halls must be a matter for speculation, but it seems unlikely this fine upstanding character really intends to follow "the highest principles of conservation and make every effort to save the structure" as his hired engineers insist, or that he has access to the estimated £2.3m the building needs spent on it.

Next year Glasgow is the Arts Council's City of Architecture and Design, but now it looks as if 1999 may be marked by the loss of one of the most remarkable pieces of architecture and design in the city. So much for historic building law, so much for the court of session if one man can hold Glasgow and Historic Scotland to ransom before the law lords can find time to do their job. The law is an ass.

MORE on the dreadful proposals of Liverpool city council to drive a new road through a city centre conservation area, destroying listed buildings en route. John Prescott has upheld his inspector's conclusion after a public inquiry that the Russell Street-Berry Street Link road is "unnecessary and unjustified", after rejecting every one of the council's 10 arguments in favour. Good.

'Piloti'

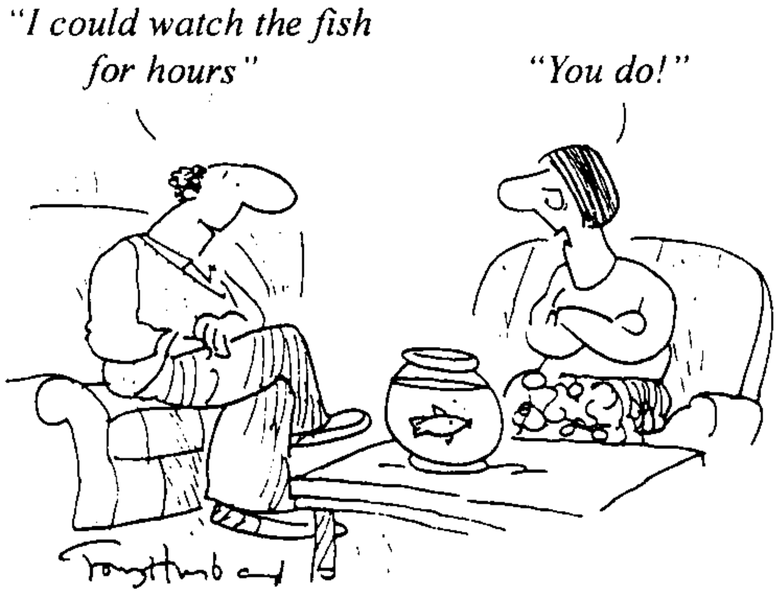
HOW BRITISH GAS WORKS

WITH an open market for gas looming, good old British Gas is bending over backwards to help it customers. Oh all right it isn't — as the case of a 70-year-old woman from Lyme Regis illustrates.

British Gas invoiced her twice for the same piece of work, and she paid once. British Gas then threatened to refer her to a debt recovery agency, Intrum Justitia, which wrote to her warning that a failure to pay could lead to seizure of her assets and an oral examination.

Frightened by British Gas's approach, the pensioner engaged a solicitor, Colin Chesterton. After he intervened British Gas apologised but refused to pay the solicitor's modest costs. The customer's MP, Oliver Letwin, took up the case and told British Gas Service's managing director Roger Wood he found "the position of British Gas in this matter entirely indefensible" and advised the company to meet the costs. The Gas Consumers Council became involved. It said it was not comfortable with the decision but "we do not have the power to instruct British Gas Services to pay such claims".

Mr Wood replied to Oliver Letwin telling him: "I am surprised that your constituent was not better served at the outset by being advised that legal costs would not be recoverable in what would have clearly been an arbitration matter." So British Gas, having scared the pensioner witless with its computerised invoicing and reference to heavy debt collectors, rests on the assurance that solicitors will not be brought into arbitration matters, leaving the elderly to fight the faceless company on their own or pay up for the mistaken invoice.



FYE

ITC Annual Report (ITC) Relative Values (Demos/Relate)

WHAT is the point of television? The BBC's answer to this question used to be "to educate, inform and entertain". ITV and the American networks have called it "a licence to print money".

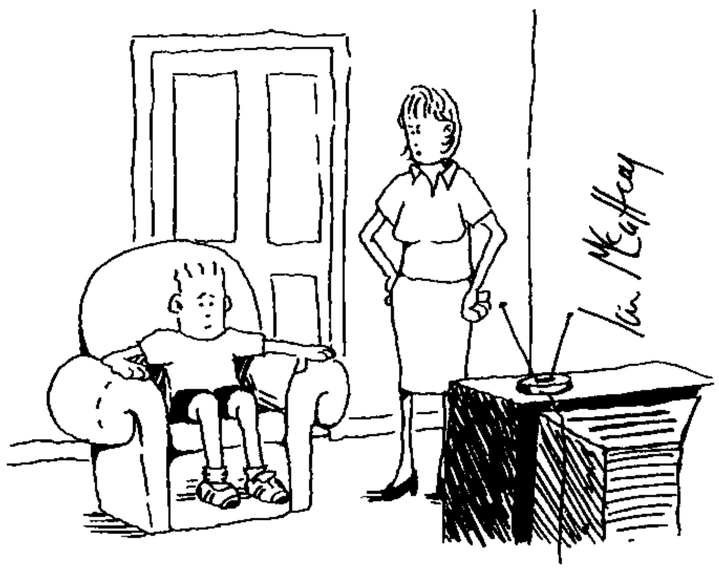
Most contemporary British television now hovers uneasily between these two ambitions. At the BBC, public service ambitions are tempered by commercialism. At ITV, commercialism is hindered by residual public service regulation. At a time of confusion, two reports just published address this question of what the medium should be doing.

Ed Straw, brother of Jack and chairman of Relate, has put out a pamphlet in alliance with the Blairite think tank Demos arguing that television soap operas should be used to promote positive role models of family relationships.

Like the dippy vicar who last week preached that *The Full Monty* was a disguised version of the Christ story, Straw has shown the terrible risks that popular culture can hold for those who come to it without the necessary experience as a consumer. Academically respectable, the argument is in practical terms ridiculous.

While it is true that soap operas have been used explicitly to educate — about cows in *The Archers*, about Aids on *EastEnders* — anyone who actually watches them knows that the crucial plot-lines in all soap operas are broken relationships and have been ever since the genre began. Love bust-ups are used by producers not only to hook viewers but to move new characters into the series and regular ones out. Soaps without broken marriages would be like westerns without guns.

In contrast, the annual report from the ITC, the regulator of commercial television, shows welcome evidence of actually watching television rather than promoting a political ideal. ITV daytime, the report warned, was increasingly in the grip of "victim TV" on the American model, in which *Vanessa* or other Oprah-clones offered up the sexually or otherwise dysfunctional as entertainment. Ratings-chasing ITV documentaries increasingly offered a diet of "crime, the emergency services and the paranormal". Channel 4, in the final year of Grade, had become increasingly safe and concerned with market share. Saturday night schedules had lost their way.



"Not more media studies homework?"

While the ITC remains rather unworldly in ignoring the causes of the market pressure on broadcasters, all of these arguments have been the themes of the more discerning television columns in the last year. And while, in the past, official reports on television have had a tendency to be contradicted by the schedules — the old-fashioned regulatory mandarins generally didn't watch the box — events in the week that this year's report was released were a tribute to the omniscience of the ITC.

The day after publication, the *Guardian* carried its extraordinary report of the methods involved in Carlton's award-winning documentary *The Connection*, which claimed to show a new heroin-smuggling route into London. These included a "secret location" for an interview with a drugs baron, but which was in fact the producer's hotel room; film of a "drug-smuggler" supposedly flying on a Columbian cartel mission but whose ticket had been bought by the producers; and faked pictures of a courier swallowing drugs concealed in condoms.

Most viewers have some sense of the standard deceptions employed in documentary — for example, earlier scenes restaged for cameras — but would be appalled at other tricks that are becoming routine: questions reshot or rephrased in the absence of the interviewee, footage from old docs or even dramas used to establish locations, researchers playing the parts of participants and so on.

Telly execs would say that such manoeuvres are sometimes necessary because the medium depends on the pictures being there. The revelations of Carlton's methods show that they usually happen when the story isn't there. And the pressure for the story to get bigger than it is in order to justify its budget and its slot is exactly what the ITC report was warning about.

'Square Eyes'

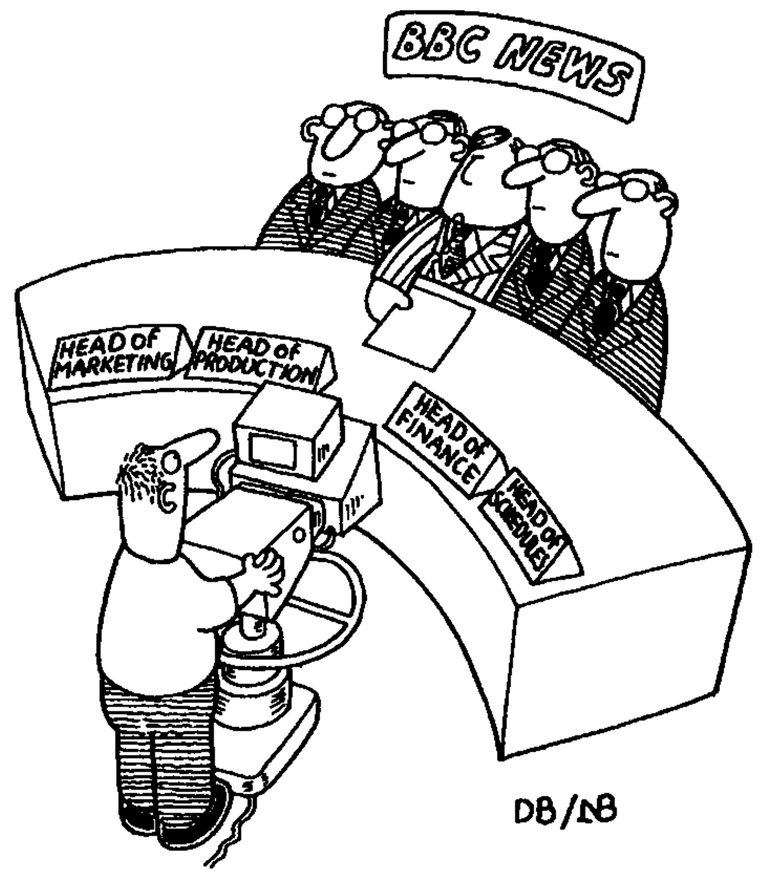
TV viewers sat glued to their sets as former White House volunteer Kathleen Willey told the world that President Bill Clinton touched her up in the inner sanctum of world power.

Hong Kong Standard

Sex sites on the Internet have also been instrumental in the design of sites more generally, notably when it comes to adverts. The trick is to maximise ad exposure and minimise the amount of time it takes to come down the line.

The Independent

NEW OLD SAYINGS



Two Heads are better than one

MEDIA NEWS

TIM ALLAN's departure from 10 Downing Street to join the Dirty Digger's Sky Television outfit provoked some wry smiles among Millbank aides who recall that the humourless Allan's nickname was Luke Skywalker to Alastair Campbell's Darth Vader.

The charmless Allan did, however, notch up at least one thigh slapper during the fraught election campaign. When hacks demanded to know the reaction of shadow cabinet members to Mandy Mandelson's decision to change Labour's campaign colour from red to purple, Allan jocularly replied that: "They're all very angry — except David Blunkett."

HOW many other supposedly impartial folk from media-land will be sucked into the government's embrace and accept jobs on quangos?

ITN's heavy duty political editor Michael Brunson is much loved by Labour spin doctors who allow him to film the dear leader at various bashes and events in Downing Street in true Hello! fashion. Brunson is also a member of a new government advisory group on "turning young people into model citizens".

Elsewhere the BBC's director of television Alan Yentob gives minister without portfolio Peter Mandelson a hand in boosting the prestige of the dome. Meanwhile Mandelson's old friend John Birt was delighted when his daughter Eliza threw in her lot with Mandelson and Yentob by becoming advertising manager for — yes — the dome.

The National
LOTTERY
BIG ticket
YES, IT'S THE NEW ALL BALLS SHOW!
AND THIS WEEK'S NUMBER IS!...
THE AMOUNT OF DIRE SHOWS SHE'S HOSTED
1 6 5 8 2 7

HOPES are still high that as a result of the row over the drugs documentary exposed as a fake by the *Guardian*, Carlton Television will lose its franchise to broadcast commercial television in London.

The inquiry by the Independent Television Commission (ITC) has limited powers, but it has already established that the programme makers and Carlton chiefs knew, or ought to have known, about the fake even before it was broadcast and before it was submitted for the awards it won.

Carlton Television, remember, won the franchise from a far superior company, Thames Television, in the wake of prime minister Margaret Thatcher's fury over the 1989 Thames programme *Death on the Rock*. This questioned the official version of the SAS shooting of unarmed IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988. Thatcher and Co demanded retractions and apologies, but all they got was a full-scale inquiry by a former Tory minister, Lord Windlesham, which completely cleared the programme.

In her indignation Thatcher used all her influence to ensure the abolition of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, which also backed the programme, and the removal of the Thames franchise.

The advantage to the Tory government of Carlton's successful bid became even clearer in January 1994, when Carlton gobbled up Central Television.

Central was engaged in making what would have been one of the most devastating political programmes ever. The Roger Cook team had enticed the lobbyist Ian Greer and his acolytes into a scam in which two bogus directors of a bogus company were looking for ministers to help them import art treasures stolen from Russia. This fantastic story appealed at once to Greer, who promised the bogus duo to deliver all sorts of influential ministerial and industrial contacts, leading even to the office of prime minister John Major.

Just before the "sting" was applied, however, Carlton "pulled" the whole programme — and gave the strictest instructions that all tapes of conversations with Greer and Co should instantly be destroyed. (Fortunately, this bizarre order was not fully carried out and at least one tape survived.)

The *Eye*'s account of this blatant censorship (12 August 1994) revealed the close contacts between the Greer organisation and commercial television. But a more likely explanation for the censorship was the close relationship between Carlton and the Tory government. If Carlton does lose the franchise, as it should, it will go down in history as a broadcaster which makes bogus documentaries but junks authentic ones.

The occupier said: "I looked out of the window and saw a big pig with brown shaggy hair, I was quite startled and phoned the police to ask if they had any pigs loose."

Ormskirk Advertiser

SEVERAL months after our allegations of victimisation in the BBC's Arabic Service, an industrial tribunal has ruled that the corporation was indeed guilty of racial discrimination against an Iraqi-born producer in the department (see *Eye* 943.)

The World Service has been ordered to pay compensation and give him a permanent contract. Will BBC bosses now have a full-scale inquiry into the feudal management techniques of its Arabic Service? Apparently not.

COMPUTER guru Robert Wallace, who is busy enforcing the new ENPS system in the BBC South West newsroom, recently sent staff an important memo.

It didn't give detailed information on the sophisticated new system that will allow hacks to access sound and pictures and become multi-skilled Birtist machines. Rather, it asked them to be careful what logo they chose as their screen saver.

"What impression," asks Wallace, "would the Eggbuckland Ladies Group have of the BBC on walking into the Plymouth newsroom to see a screen saver which simply says 'Arse'?" Perhaps the ladies would congratulate the user on his or her succinct summary of life in a BBC newsroom?

COURT & CIRCULAR

ARE Giles Elgood of Reuters and *Daily Express* royal editor Robert Jobson by any chance related? Anyone reading Elgood's 30 April story about an exhibition of royal dresses at Kensington Palace and the *Express* splash under Jobson's byline the next day might think so.

Reuters: "The dresses, conservative but colourful and mostly from the British fashion houses of Hartnell and Hardy Amies, will all be displayed in rotation."

Express: "Conservative but colourful, they are mostly from the British fashion houses of Hartnell and Hardy Amies."

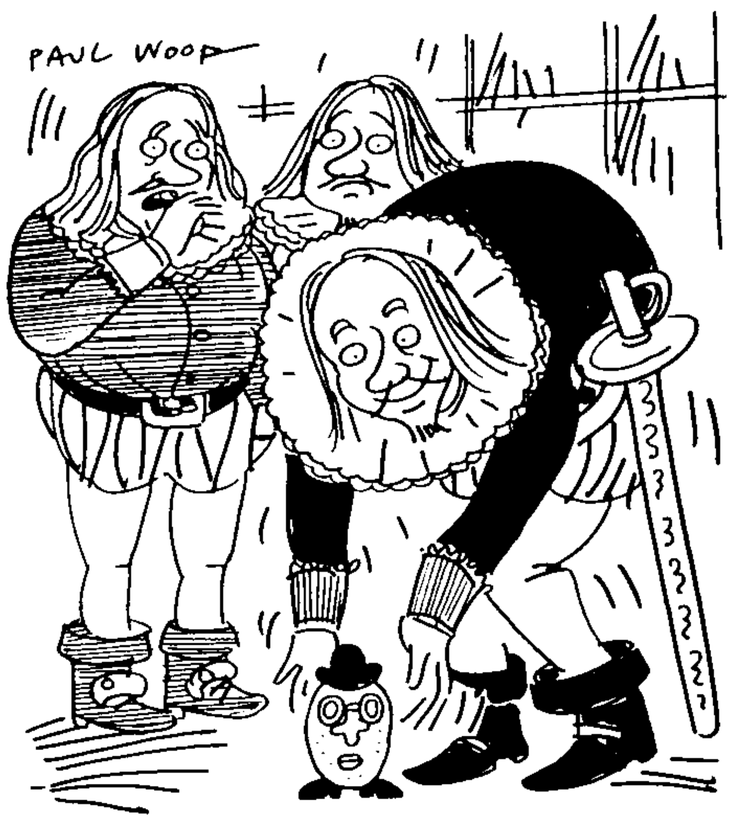
Reuters: "The exhibition has been three years in preparation and so far does not contain anything linked to Kensington Palace's most famous occupant, Princess Diana, but organisers hope to make good the omission."

Express: "The exhibition... has been three years in preparation and so far does not contain anything linked to Kensington Palace's most famous resident, Princess Diana. But organisers hope to make good the omission."

Reuters: "Themed rooms show mannequins of young aristocratic girls wearing feathered head-dresses and long trains to be formally presented at court."

Express: "There are also mannequins of aristocratic young girls wearing feathered head-dresses and long trains to be formally presented at court."

And so on. Weird or what?



"What's Walter brought back with him this time?"

COURT & CIRCULAR

A FOOTNOTE to an article about Claridges in the *Guardian* on 2 May referred to its author as "Countess Spencer", presenter of "a feature on Claridges, *One Foot in the Past*, on Tuesday on BBC2".

In the article the "Countess Spencer" wrote: "I had many happy luncheons here with my stepdaughter Diana." That in itself was interesting — the Princess of Wales and her brother Earl Spencer both loathed their stepmother — but so was the author's choice of name.

Raine Spencer has of course had many titles. She was originally Mrs Gerald Legge. When her husband became a viscount she was Lady Lewisham, and on his accession to the earldom she became the Countess of Dartmouth. After her divorce she married Earl Spencer, and following his death she married a Frenchman who was referred to by the media as the Comte de Chambrun even though it was his brother who was the count.

Now, as that marriage seems to have ended, she has once more become "Countess Spencer", writing of "my husband, Johnnie". It's lucky she mentioned his name, otherwise there might have been confusion as to which husband she was referring.

WORLD OF WHINE

COLES bar and restaurant in Marlborough, Wilts, was privileged to receive an unannounced visit from wine expert Alice King, author of the *Hamlyn Atlas of Wine*, who was celebrating her birthday with three friends.

Shortly afterwards, however, a big whinge appeared on page three of the *Daily Telegraph*, noting King's unhappiness with a "rogue bottle of Beaujolais", the almighty row that ensued over whether the wine was drinkable or not and the £16 the restaurant eventually agreed to knock off her bill.

"We wouldn't dream of going back," the wine writer told the *Telegraph*. "It has got nothing to do with qualifications or experience. If a customer is not satisfied with a bottle of wine, that should be enough."

What King failed to say was that by the time she and her chums stormed off into the night they'd consumed two pints of Directors bitter, a bottle of Riesling, a bottle of Semillon Chardonnay, and four of Fleurie. After which even the finest tastebuds might have been a little tired, if not emotional.

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

THE omnipresent broadcaster and composer Michael Berkeley, linch-pin of the Radio 3 atonal establishment, is also artistic director of the Cheltenham International Festival of Music, an annual beano supported by the Arts Council — ie by taxpayers.

The festival brochure boasts that it has "some of the world's leading composers contributing world and British premieres". Yet on perusing the listings one cannot help noticing that among venerable world figures one composer seems especially favoured.

No fewer than nine of his works are being performed (even "featured composer" George Benjamin has only five); and while it is true this composer among composers is one of four being honoured for their 50th year, the other honourees — Brian Elias, Jonathan Lloyd and Nigel Osborne — only get one performance apiece.

So who could this giant among giants be? Er, step forward Michael Berkeley, artistic director of the Cheltenham festival.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

Diana balls

"On my way to the Chanel show, I tried to leave the Ritz by the Rue Cambon entrance, only to find that it was locked and bolted. A bellman showed me a way out through a door into a back-hall anteroom which had a door to the street. It seemed eerily familiar. Jonathan Becker, who was with me, said, 'Isn't this the Princess Diana exit?' '*Oui*,' replied the bellman. We all looked at one another in a Princess Diana moment."

— Dominick Dunne, *Vanity Fair* (submitted by Ken Wilson).

"As the mounds of flowers grew ever higher (some reaching a height of over a metre and a half) and formed solid blocks upon the earth, it became possible to speak of floral architecture. But Diana's floral architecture differed from previous examples of large-scale floral mourning structures... Diana's architecture was as much an architecture of cellophane as flowers. Often the multitude of transparent plastic wrappers became the dominant formal aesthetic, forming what appeared to be glass structures or blocks of ice in the summer sun... Here, summer houses had been converted into crystal coffins, like those prepared for Snow White and Sleeping Beauty."

— From *Planet Diana: Cultural Studies and Global Mourning*, published by the University of Western Sydney, Australia (submitted by John Hodge).

DOING THE ROUNDS

Impotence

BRITISH men itching to get their hands on Viagra (sildenafil) — the impotence pill not available on the NHS — and trying their luck in Harley Street should be very wary of the mark up.

Some private clinics have an abysmal record of ripping off desperate men and rely on the assumption that punters are too embarrassed to question the fee. Many sufferers prefer to answer anonymous private ads in the press than confront their GP — whose knowledge and attitudes may in any case be unhelpful.

An Impotence Association survey (helpline: 0181-767 7791) found that half those men who do see a GP come away dissatisfied, and 23 percent get no treatment at all. If they do get treatment, the commonest prescribed impotence drug in the UK is Caverject (alprostadil), which works in a similar manner to Viagra by relaxing smooth muscle and increasing penile blood flow. But it has to be given as a shot in the shaft (not too painful though, I'm told.)

Alas, impotent men who decide to go private commonly end up paying more than £1,000 for a short consultation (worth £60), a few blood tests (worth £100 at most), a trial intra-penile injection of Caverject (£7) and — if it works — a few doses to be getting along with (£30).

A much better and cheaper impotence service is available in parts of the NHS, but you may have to persevere to find it. Some GPs are happy to initiate treatment, but others prefer to refer to a hospital clinic, usually run by a urologist or a specialist nurse. Caverject is available on the NHS or, if you prefer, the same drug can be given intra-urethrally (down the end of the penis) in pellet form. This is amusingly known as MUSE. If either suits, you'll be given a small supply and referred back to your GP, who must then decide how much to shell out for your sex life. There is great variability here. As Sister Nolly Biggins, an impotence specialist at Doncaster Royal Infirmary, puts it: "The good GPs recognise the distress and marital breakdown that impotence can cause and will prescribe enough of the drug for sex twice a week. But I have known male GPs who'll only dish out enough for once a month. I mean, what do they think their knob's for — stirring the tea?"

Viagra, Caverject and MUSE don't work for everyone and are not without side effects. Vacuum pumps have been around for years, are very effective and have very few side-effects. But for some ludicrous reason are not available on the NHS. As Sister Biggins explains: "They're very useful for diabetic men, half of whom become impotent and many don't want to take any more drugs. But because the pumps aren't prescribable, I've had to buy some using charitable donations and share them out amongst the patients."

At £200 each they're not cheap but they recoup the cost of prescribable drug treatment in a few months. Some men who can't afford them buy cheap penis pump enlargers from sex shops or mail ads. "They're a disaster," says Sister Biggins. "They don't work properly and they usually give you a tight plastic ring to slip over the base of the penis to maintain the erection. Often, the ring's so tight that it won't come off and you have to go to casualty to get it cut off." You have been warned.

● WHILE Frank Dobson, the health secretary, considers the merit of adding vacuum pumps to the NHS list, he should also ponder another absurdity for diabetic patients. Insulin pens, which allow patients to deliver pre-prepared doses in a far more convenient way than farting around with bottles and syringes, are not prescribable on the NHS — although syringes are. Even more bizarre is that the needles that go with syringes are prescribable, but the replacement needles for the pens aren't.

"I'm afraid it's serious — you're infringing several patents"

Thought for the day...

AT City Hospital in Belfast, an exhausted junior doctor finally got back to her on-call room at 5.19am only to find that her bed had been removed and given to a patient to sleep on. In the corridor.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

THE dairy industry has recently undergone a dramatic religious experience: it has discovered grass.

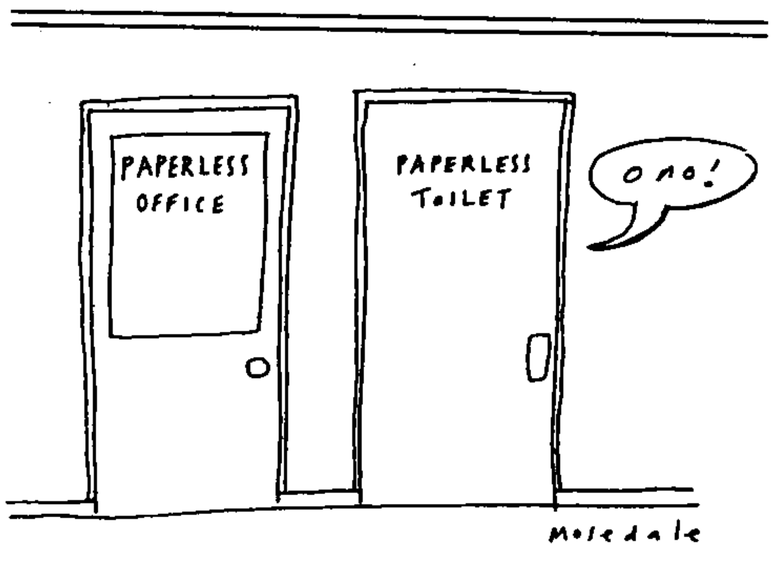
Ever since the 1970s when Royal Agricultural College principal and intensification maniac Robert Boutflour dismissed grass as "water standing up", milk producers have preferred to turn most of it into silage, which is regarded with reverence as a proper scientific food, and supplemented it with tons of cattle cake which was also scientifically prepared (see BSE).

Apparently, however, this was all wrong. Grass is actually the cheapest, healthiest and most nutritious forage by far, and with a little management can provide the main diet for most of the year. So now there are regular mass meetings where missionaries from New Zealand preach the word, *Farmers Weakly* expounds the nature of grass in a dozen articles every issue and everyone is queuing up to claim that they thought of it first.

So what went wrong with the lovely high-input, high out-put and high stress system so beloved of the dairy support industries, who supply "high genetic potential" breeding stock (toast-racks with udders), concentrate feed and drugs? Sadly, with the recent crash in raw milk price these inputs have proved just a bit too expensive, hence the sudden interest in the green stuff and a general attempt at downshifting.

Gumboot confidently predicts they will soon discover clover, which dramatically cuts fertiliser use, and sometime after that a new technology called "hay-making".

'Gumboot'



SIGNAL FAILURES

Withdrawal symptoms

A GOOD starting point for Labour's avowed policy of encouraging greater use of railways would be to clamp down on the illegal withdrawal of train services.

Since the 1960s the law has required that closure procedures are followed before passenger trains are withdrawn. But the rail industry, now awash with lawyers, seems to have become forgetful. The Watford to Croxley Green line no longer has a train service but has never been through the statutory closure process. In two other cases the process is now under way several years *after* trains were withdrawn.

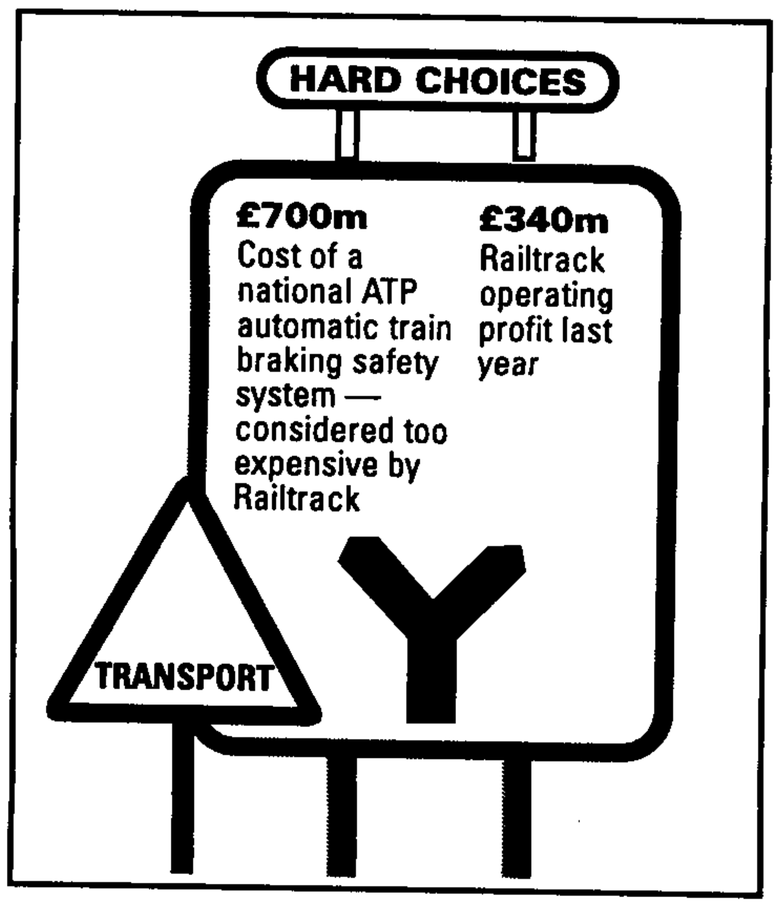
Late last year the office of passenger rail franchising (Opraf) issued a bizarre notice stating that "after due consideration, on 18 July 1994 (sic) the British Railways Board proposes to withdraw passenger services" from Pendleton station, Salford. The station closed in 1994 after an arson attack. Another notice with muddled tenses proposed discontinuing "railway passenger services" from the short line between Derby and Sinfin — more than four years *after* the trains were replaced by a taxi.

The main argument for withdrawing the Sinfin service is that Railtrack would otherwise spend £50,000 on signalling compatible with modern Sprinter trains. Why this should figure in the debate is puzzling; Railtrack is paid vast amounts in access charges on the understanding it will use them to maintain the *entire* rail system in a modern state. Since there has been no legal sanction of the axing of the Sinfin trains, Railtrack arguably inherited a duty to maintain the Sinfin branch for passenger trains. But instead of insisting Railtrack coughs up, Opraf argues the investment would not bring value for money. But Opraf's task is to obtain value for *public* money — not private money such as Railtrack's.

The way the closure process has been abused could set worrying precedents, not least for sudden withdrawal of trains elsewhere without prior assessment of the hardship caused. Also, if Railtrack gets away with isolating the costs of maintenance in one place, a principle will be established which may help Railtrack propose closure of lightly-used railways on the grounds that money needs spending on a tunnel, viaduct or signalling. When the present franchises come up for renewal Railtrack could isolate costs to produce persuasive proposals for downgrading or closing bits of the network in return for lower access charges or greater investment elsewhere.

Nobody seems worried by this. Rail regulator John Swift should announce his decisions on Sinfin and Pendleton later this month, but he showed he was on the side of private enterprise last year when he rejected the advice of the local rail users' committee and declared Wrexham Central station should close because it stood in the way of a 600-space car park proposed by a property developer. This leaves the Labour government as the last hope, but passengers need not hold their breath. When transport minister Gavin Strang sanctioned closure of Wrexham Central — forcing passengers to walk from a replacement station 300 yards further away from the town centre — he said the closure would, er, "encourage use of the rail network and benefit rail users generally".

'Dr B. Ching'


HARD CHOICES
£700m
Cost of a national ATP automatic train braking safety system — considered too expensive by Railtrack
£340m
Railtrack operating profit last year
TRANSPORT

Rotten Boroughs

Election round-up

LONDON: There was a shock defeat for John McCafferty, leader of the "odious" Labour regime that has wrecked **Hackney**.

McCafferty, who was in charge of Hackney when the Mark Trotter cover-up took place, when housing director Bernard Crofton was sacked on trumped-up charges of racism, and when Hackney Downs officially became the worst-run school in Britain and was closed, was odds-on favourite to win his North Defoe seat.

He lost, incredibly, to the **Greens** who had never previously won a seat in the capital. The result may have had something to do with disenchanted locals in McCafferty's ward photocopying the Rotten Boroughs page from the last *Eye* (the one that listed his deeds) and putting it in the letter box of every house in the ward.

No one party now has overall control in the borough. The irony is that had McCafferty not stood, Labour would probably have won the two North Defoe seats and now be in charge of the borough.

One piece of good news was that Hettie Peters, the former Labour social services chair who was hounded out of office for exposing the Mark Trotter fiasco and had her own reputation smeared with false allegations, regained her place on the council as a *Liberal Democrat*. When Peters's result was declared local Labour MP Brian Sedgemore exclaimed: "I've never known a crook to be elected in Hackney before." When Peters heard this she replied: "Apart from you, Brian."

Labour was also embarrassed in **Islington**, where it lost 12 seats and overall control of the council. This was a protest vote against Labour's money-wasting, particularly on neighbourhood services, rather than at individuals. But Labour did rally in **Lambeth** — where the party had raised its hands and admitted past indiscretions — and in **Bent** where the legacy of mad Nkechi Amalu-Johnson from the barmy years of Tory rule was still in voters' minds.

SHEFFIELD: City council and Labour group leader Mike Bower lost his seat to the Liberal Democrats. Bower, live on TV from the count at two in the morning, looked shocked at the result. Someone should remind him about the millions Sheffield taxpayers are still paying in interest for his grandiose schemes (see *Eyes passim*).

Jobs for the Boys

TAXPAYERS' money is going into the pockets of Labour party pals in Leeds without any check by committee or councillors.

The handouts, in the form of "consultancies", totalled £774,792 last year. Council taxpayers who would like to know if Leeds got value for their money will have to wait: the council isn't sure, having kept no record of how much each department spent on the consultancies or why.

One consultant was Hedley Salt, former Labour leader of Barnsley council, who was taken on without committee approval. Salt was paid £500 a day for 12 days' work (plus travelling expenses) "accessing his networks in south Yorkshire" in setting up a regional assembly for Yorkshire and Humberside (more gravy trains and jobs for the boys).

In neighbouring Kirklees, meanwhile, another Pizzagate scandal is causing embarrassment. Council officers rejected an application by a local man to convert a shop into a pizza takeaway, despite his offers to install a £100,000 ventilation system. When he appealed against the decision, three councillors — Fred Pickles, Alan Gibson and Thimme Gowda — put their weight against it.

However, when officers recommended refusal for a near identical planning application, Fred Pickles intervened to get the matter referred to planning sub-committee where he overturned the officer's decision with the help of Gibson. The application was in the name of a Mr Jallei, but the building belongs to Coun Thimme Gowda. Chief executive Tony Elson cleared the trio of any misconduct: "I have received assurances that no improper influence was used."

Scotch Corner

PEACE camp protestors who want nuclear weapons out of Faslane may themselves be kicked off the site if the new Argyll & Bute council has its way.

Pre-1996 the peace camp land was owned by Strathclyde regional authority, which turned a blind eye to it. The new authority, however, wants to evict protestors but is having problems. The clearance was arranged for 1 April but the council cocked up the wording of the eviction order so badly the sheriff's court threw it out.

Nevertheless Argyll & Bute is pressing ahead at a cost to taxpayers of £400,000 — a sum coincidentally the council will save by closing down eight rural schools it claims it cannot afford to run. If the schools close the Scottish office will award the council a grant of £400,000 as a reward for "efficiency savings" (so much for education, education, education). Wouldn't it be easier for the Scottish office simply to hand over the cash regardless, save the schools and leave the peace people where they are?

Junket of the Week

MEMBERS of Medway council are so dedicated to getting rid of their rubbish they are planning a gruelling jaunt round France, Italy and Germany to find out how other countries do it.

The tour by the new unitary authority takes in Bordeaux, Toulouse and Castlenaudary in France, Rome and Milan in Italy and Munster in Germany. Paid for by taxpayers, the trip has been agreed even though no one knows how much it will cost. But as Labour environment committee vice-chairman Paul Harriet said: "It may sound like a junket but it can actually be cheaper to fly to Europe rather than travel to somewhere like Newcastle and stay overnight."

This will gratify those locals not connected to the main drains system. The council has just told them bills for emptying cesspits are to rise — in some cases by £1,200.

Anglesey

MORE from junketing and nepotism-friendly Anglesey (*Eye* 948), where council chief executive Leon Gibson said he would be happy to meet the public to discuss such matters if such an occasion were organised. It was — and 700 angry islanders turned up. There was one spare seat, though: Mr Gibson's. He said he had a previous engagement.

Gibson has resisted calls for his immediate resignation but says he might consider early retirement at the end of the millennium. By then his retirement lump sum will be more than £120,000, and his annual pension nearly £50,000. A thousand islanders are threatening to withhold council tax if Gibson doesn't resign now.

Meanwhile housing director John Arthur Jones has been charged with nine offences relating to intimidation of witnesses and attempts to pervert the course of justice during a police inquiry into housing and council tax benefit scams. Jones enjoyed a golfing break in Florida earlier this year with a long-standing chum, Det Insp Roy Gregson. Gregson has been admonished for accompanying Jones on the trip, although Knacker stresses that Gregson is not involved in current inquiries.

Southwark

DISTRICT auditor Brian Willmore has revealed that the previous administration in Southwark was so pisspoor at managing the housing repairs budget more than £35m was unspent.

The money was left in different accounts accumulating interest while Southwark's 53,000 tenants continued to occupy some of the worst housing stock in Britain. Even when money was spent on repairs, it seems the council took leave of its senses — certainly on the Dog Kennel Estate in Dulwich.

There the council recently fitted new windows and repaired the concrete stairwells of Goldwell and Gatebeck blocks. Five days after completing these expensive "improvements", councillors agreed to demolish the blocks as part of a "regeneration programme", wasting £150,000 in total.

Pseuds Corner

Shining with the promise of dawn, in he [Ruud Gullit] strode. Single-handed, in the space of two years, the player turned player-manager lassoed the *Zeitgeist* of modern football and rode it bareback in the rodeo that is New Football. With inimitable talent he wooed the hearts and minds — old and young, male and female — of the British public. But in the narrow corridors of their jealous minds, some hated him for it.

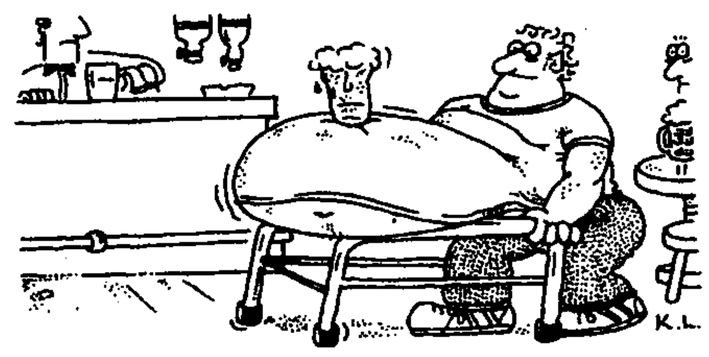
EMMA LINDSEY
Observer

What is so clear about the band [Massive Attack] is that they are from Bristol — less because of some ineffable "sound" than because of the relaxed naturalness of their multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-sonic spectacle. Yet it's a naturalness rooted in the moody low of island dub and righteous reggae, driven forward by the American edge of hip-hop. Massive show all the fragments of Britain united in angst, nervy defensiveness, a love-hate relationship with the techno-driven chaos culture that allows us all to live together in the first place .

PAT KANE
Guardian

There's an uneasy but neat fit here between the feigned agelessness of the personae that inhabit this sonic Wendyhouse [Chris Evans' breakfast show] and the timelessness of the slot itself. The real *ne plus ultra* of breakfast radio — it occurs to me as I shaved, laved, peed and coasted up — is to effect a sense of interminable "knell" in amongst the coursing ephemera that really are spiralling down the plughole of time.

WILL SELF
Times Magazine



Befriend your belly

How do you feel about your belly area?
Does it make you feel anxious or relaxed,
vulnerable or confident,
irritable or supported?
In short is your belly your friend?
This one-day workshop is an inspiring and creative way to access the delights and support your belly has to offer.

Advertising flyer

***parallax** seeks to reconfigure contemporary critical theories and cultural practices through a critique of their productions. This is a basis for practicing (sic) otherwise. It is an exchange between theory and cul tural productions that attempts to radically alter both. Alterations enacted in order to remobilize and repoliticize cultural studies.*

Flyer advertising "Parallax", "a journal of metadiscursive theory and cultural practices", produced by the Centre for Cultural Studies, University of Leeds

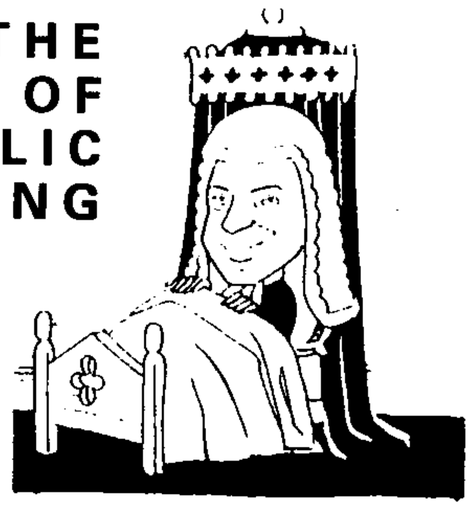
Yet a packed hall is shuddering and nodding furiously — as that sound-radicalism mingles with the grooves and raps of urban British life, frames the energy of bus shelters, street-scenes, non-elite kids with strange new dreams. We should remember, sometimes, just how early the end of this century has come in this country, how much we've mapped out the next 50 years in the past 20, and how much pop is the central carto-grapher of the British future — with Massive Attack as the main map-makers.

PAT KANE
Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: Alex Fraser, James Mackenzie, Mark Thakkar, Anthony Dean, Mark Baillie, Greg Aitken.

£10 paid for entries

THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING



A DOCUMENT has found its way to the *Eye* giving a fascinating insight into the way government propaganda operates — and into the depth of vanity of the lord chancellor, Derry Irvine.

"Notes on drafting speeches for the lord chancellor and parliamentary secretary" was issued at the end of April by Michelle Cale, chief speechwriter in the lord chancellor's department policy group secretariat. It was circulated to the speechwriters who pen the golden words of Derry Irvine and his minister, Geoff Hoon MP.

The four-page memo details the buzz-words and catchphrases of the moment that must be included — and "forbidden words" that are no longer permitted.

Under the heading "Government Slogans", Ms Cale writes: "The Lord Chancellor and the Minister expect their speeches to be in harmony with the broader Government message... These are some of the slogans in use now — you have probably already heard them used by the Lord Chancellor and other Ministers:

"● 'This is a listening Government.'

"● 'This Government is returning power to the people.'

"● 'We are creating a decent society of which we can all be proud.'

"● 'Government in the interests of the many, not just the few.'

"● 'Rights and duties must go together. There is a two-way obligation from society to the individual and from the individual to society'."

The memo also reveals the importance to the lord chancellor of toadying to Tony Blair. "If you want to quote another politician in support of a point, the Prime Minister is the Lord Chancellor's preferred source," advises Ms Cale helpfully.

Organisations and bodies who invite Lord Irvine to speak should not be offended if he does not thank his hosts, as is customary on such occasions. "It is usually a waste of precious audience attention," you see. Ms Cale is honest enough to admit that even the great Lord Irvine may not hold his listeners' attention throughout a long speech — "audiences will listen to what the speaker has to say in the first couple of minutes, and they will wake up again for the end" — so the important thing is to deliver the vital soundbites first, and save trivialities such as thank-yous until everyone has dozed off — "work something in on page 2, or just before the end".

Much of Ms Cale's memo is devoted to a long and pernickity list of Lord Irvine's linguistic likes and dislikes. "The Minister," apparently, "likes the construction 'to have and to hold' — but the Lord Chancellor likes the construction 'to have and hold' (ie without the second 'to'). The Lord Chancellor regards the second 'to' as superfluous, but the Minister regards it as essential..." Similarly, it is a big no-no to write "In my talk this evening..." according to Ms Cale. The Lord Chancellor, pompous prat that he is, prefers the phrase "In my remarks this evening..."

Irvine has clearly realised that it was a mistake to compare himself to Cardinal Wolsey. Ms Cale writes: "In speeches for the Lord Chancellor, avoid referring to historical figures. Treat literary characters with extreme caution. If you want to use a quotation in support of an argument, take a moment to consider the background and reputation of the person who made the original statement. To give extreme examples, it would be unwise to suggest using statements by Hitler or Richard Nixon in support of the Government's position!" Indeed.

Finally Ms Cale makes it clear that it is very, very important not to include statements "which may lay the Lord Chancellor open to ridicule or criticism". She gives a helpful example: "You should think twice before inviting him to say, for example, that he 'is not wallpapering over the cracks'." Boo-boom!

Letters

Beaten on the beat

Sir,

You do have a tendency to state that 92 percent of the RUC is Protestant which is factually correct. What you fail to mention is that over the years any Roman Catholic joining has been subject to a campaign of murder, threats and intimidation by republican elements.

Perhaps, from the safety of your desks, you are made of sterner stuff. Perhaps not.

Yours faithfully,
P.T. HILL,

Newcastle, Staffs.

A matter of principal

Sir,

I would like to point out an error in your High Principals column piece entitled "Lankester Bummer 2" of 17 April.

It was not a lecturer who asked if Lankester was willing to take a pay cut this year, but a member of the administrative and clerical staff (ie, of the lower ranking staff at SOAS) and a UNISON member to boot.

Thank you.
VIVIENNE GEARD,

Programme Administrator, School of Oriental and African Studies, London WC1.

LUVVIES

"We went in alone at the end of a hugely hectic day, and John [Malkovich] just spoke a few lines and began to weep. I started to weep. I looked over at Leonardo, and tears were just streaming down his face. We were looking at each other like, my God, we have seen the king, and Leo said, 'I don't think I want to do this scene. I think I just want to go back and get in bed and cry for a couple of hours.' "

RANDALL WALLACE, director, on filming The Man in the Iron Mask
Premiere Magazine (US edition)

"I wasn't doing a particular scene very well, so I was trying to disorient myself. It really worked. I stopped because all I was thinking was, 'Ow, my head hurts'. We got a very good take."

RUFUS SEWELL (on why he was banging his head against a wall during the shooting of "Carrington")
Daily Telegraph

CONTRIBUTORS: C. Cavey & S. Openshaw.

Colour supplement

Sir,

Have just received my latest subscription copy, but the 3-D glasses seem to have fallen out en route. Please advise.

JOHN DEAN,

Headington, Oxford.

Sir,

I was pleased to see that Private Eye has bought the redundant presses which once printed TODAY *and that the magazine now appears in glorious "Eddie Shah-O-Vision" (as the talented young* SPITTING IMAGE *scriptwriters once described it). I wonder what those writers are doing today?*

Yours faithfully,
PAUL TURNER,

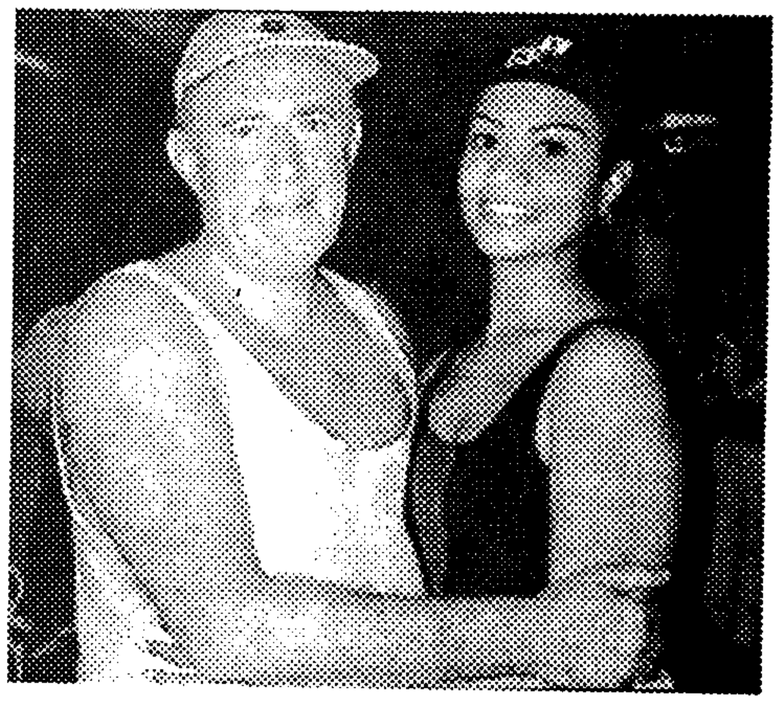
Alnwick, Northumberland.

Sir,

Although the lord chancellor's apartment may have given you an excuse to experiment with multicolour publishing, the only other item in your last issue which pastels might have improved was a holiday snapshot, inexplicably left in black and white.

Yours monochromatically,
JOHN CONNELL,

Via e-mail.



Animal, vegetable, liberal

Sir,

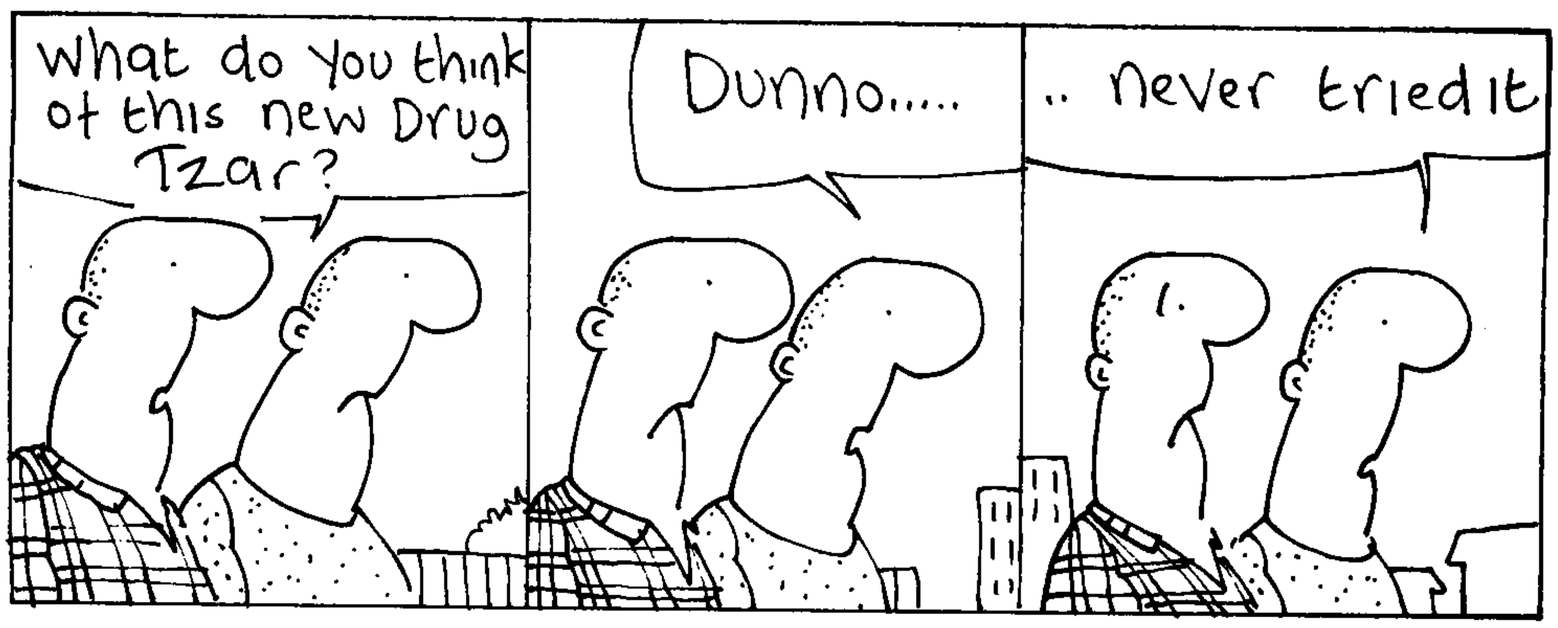
I note with interest that Sir Paul McCartney has requested that a fitting tribute to his recently deceased wife would be to donate monies to animal welfare and cancer research. Perhaps he could combine the two and request that her old "animal welfare" cronies stop sending firebombs to people involved in medical research so that perhaps a cure for breast cancer might be found more easily.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GOODIER,

Via e-mail.

Yobs

HUSBAND



I-SPY *Winchester, Hants*

Submitted by Tony Slade. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Please Sir

Sir,

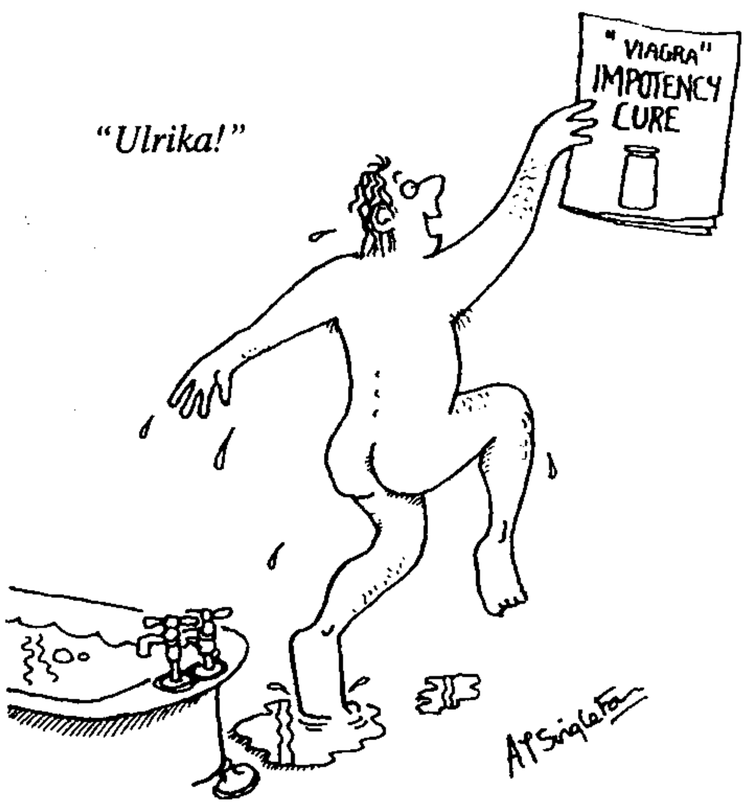
In response to your article of 17 April (EYE 948), we felt compelled to voice our support for Mr Paul Brennan. Your article omitted the fact that from the summer and Christmas terms '97 he was a history teacher at Cotham Grammar School, Bristol, during which time we were lucky enough to be taught by him. Towards the beginning of the course the majority of us were having doubts as to whether history A-level was the right choice for us. In the short time that we were taught by him he managed to dispel these doubts and inspire many of us to consider studying history at degree level. Not only this but he gave us faith in ourselves and our abilities to reach the highest level of education, such as Oxford and Cambridge. As well as being an inspirational history teacher he set up and ran an extra curricular general studies and discussion group in order to broaden our educational horizons.

We were therefore distressed to read the negative comments of the article, which showed a very biased view. It failed to give an account of student opinion or give him a visible opportunity to defend himself.

Although we continue to be taught history to a high standard, we still think of Mr Brennan as an important influence and we miss him.

Yours sincerely,
YEAR 12 HISTORY, COTHAM GRAMMAR,

Cotham, Bristol.



Bone (meal) to pick

Sir,

Down on the Farm is strictly for entertainment — not for information. "Marge's" report (1 May) was tendentious to the point of self-parody — even by the standards of your esteemed organ.

To my certain knowledge good quality Meat & Bone Meal was regarded as a wholesome ingredient for animal feed throughout the sixties and seventies. It was a bacterially clean powder, rich principally in protein, phosphorus and calcium. It was not "discovered" by BOCM in the seventies — although that firm did make a considerable contribution to improved ruminant nutrition.

Until the early fifties the government actually compelled the use of Meat & Bone in cattle feeds, to save on imported proteins!

The processing regulations, even after the partial relaxation, were as strict here as in most countries and the production methods practically identical. There was no reason to anticipate the tragedy of BSE — but hindsight is a great justifier.

Perhaps the truth may emerge from the present inquiry. It will certainly not come out of "Marge's" vapourings. She should try giving advice to the lovelorn — or anything but reporting.

Yours sincerely,
EDWARD SPALTON,

Spalton Nutrition Ltd, Derby.

Lookalike

Leo **Edwina**

Sir,

Am I the only person to have noticed the eggstraordinary resemblance between Leo Sayer, the global star whose career went so very wrong, and the sexy novelist and former MP Edwina Currie, whose career did much the same?

Can they both have been over-egging the pudding?

Yours,
ROGER HOYLE,

Charlwood, Surrey.

Miffed and Jones

Sir,

Re: Your piece on Fiona Jones (HP Sauce, EYE 948). You say: "Since he (a local business man) paid for the (placard) boards himself they don't need to be added to Jones's bill."

You miss the point of the limit imposed by law on election expenses. It is to ensure that no more than the legal limit is spent **by anyone** *to promote any one candidate. On your reasoning, Rupert Murdoch or Bernie Ecclestone (for example) could spend a million promoting one candidate, which would not need to go down on the candidate's expenses.*

You ridicule complaints of the free use of the town hall photocopier for the benefit of Fiona Jones. This is much more important than the (comparatively trivial) cost involved. Apart from the question of election expenses, it was also misuse of council facilities to favour one candidate, and theft from the council taxpayers.

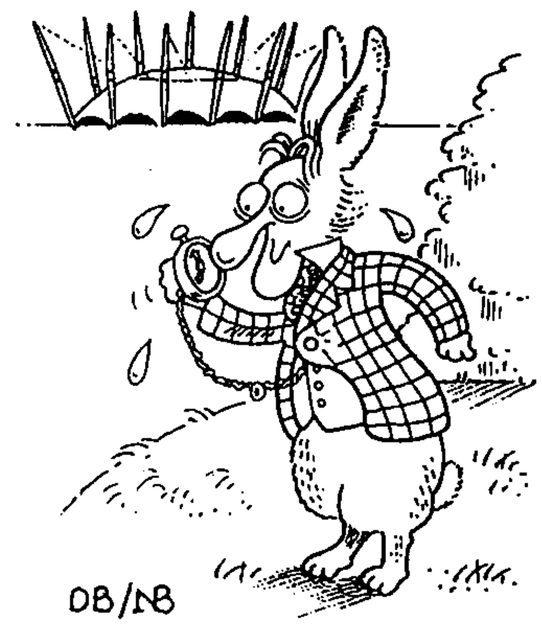
I was a candidate in Chesterfield. I had no funding whatsoever from anyone, and my sole income is my old age pension of £63 per week. Free use of the town hall photocopier would have been a godsend to me.

Incidentally, the Neward improprieties also took place in Chesterfield, but so far the police and CPS don't seem interested.

NORMAN SCARTH,

Leeds.

NEW OLD SAYINGS



Time waits for no Mandelson

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"His brain was going as quick as his legs and he was in two minds."
ALAN BRAZIL, Sky Sports 2
(Gill Harvey)

"But the main group, just a few yards behind the main group..."
BRENDAN FOSTER, BBC1
(Barry Freeman)

"There's Nascimento, the pacemaker from Brazil, running a sensible race, and sharing out the work with his compatriot from Argentina..."
BRENDAN FOSTER, BBC1
(Geoff Woollen)

"She [the England team's faith healer] gives the players a shoulder to talk to."
NEIL WEBB, Sky TV
(Steve Speight)

Radio Commentator No.1: *You're having problems reading the time there, aren't you?*

Radio Commentator No.2: *It's these new digital clocks, I can't get the hang of them. I much prefer a good old hand job...*
Hokonui Gold, New Zealand
(Mark Bryan)

HOM SAP BY DAVID AUSTIN

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "God has communicated to me that those of us who preach the gospels must have the courage to face the scoffing and laughter of people," Chen Hon-Ming told his followers in the Dallas suburb of Garland. "Even so, my prediction that God would broadcast live on Channel 18 Television last week has not been realised, nor has he made the personal visit to Dallas which I prophesied. In fact, his conduct so far has not been at all encouraging."

Chen Hon-Ming, known to his followers as Teacher Chen, was addressing the 150 members of his Taiwanese cult, who moved en masse to Texas last year as part of their preparations for the end of the world. "Regrettably, it appears that everything I have preached to you over the past four years has turned out to be shit. God did not appear on Channel 18 television on 21 March. The sun has not disappeared. There has not been a nuclear holocaust, and we have not been rescued by flying saucers and taken to another planet. I give up." *(Otago Daily Times [New Zealand] 26/3/98. Spotter: David Green)*

—●—

● "It's bizarre. Instead of extinguishing fires, the Umtata fire brigade seems determined to help buildings burn down," lamented businessman Christos Kapsalis to reporters outside the ruins of a hotel in South Africa's East Cape province.

Another businessman, Graeme Alexander, also blamed the destruction of the hotel on the Umtata fire brigade. "The fire only got out of control because they took four hours to get here, even though the fire station is just round the corner. Apparently, they were mid-way through a jambalaya lunch when the emergency call came in, and didn't want to be disturbed. Then they discovered that the pump on their fire engine didn't work, because no one had serviced it for months. So they tried connecting their hose to a fire hydrant instead, but it leaked like a sieve, sending water pouring into the gutter without anything reaching the nozzle.

"For a while, they tried filling cups and bottles from the hydrant and pouring dribbles of water onto the flames, but then they just seemed to give up, and stood around waiting for the fire to extinguish itself. They were more like bystanders than firemen. When I asked them why they didn't go back to the station and get another fire engine, they shrugged and said that the others were all being repaired. But they wouldn't tell me where they were being repaired, and frankly, I think they've sold them." *(Daily Despatch [East London], 7/3/98. Spotter: David Jones)*

—●—

● *"It was all right for the first ten minutes, and then the actors started swearing and stripping off," Michelle Provette (mother of seven-year-old Jamie Provette) told reporters after a Saturday morning children's film show at Worthing's Connaught*

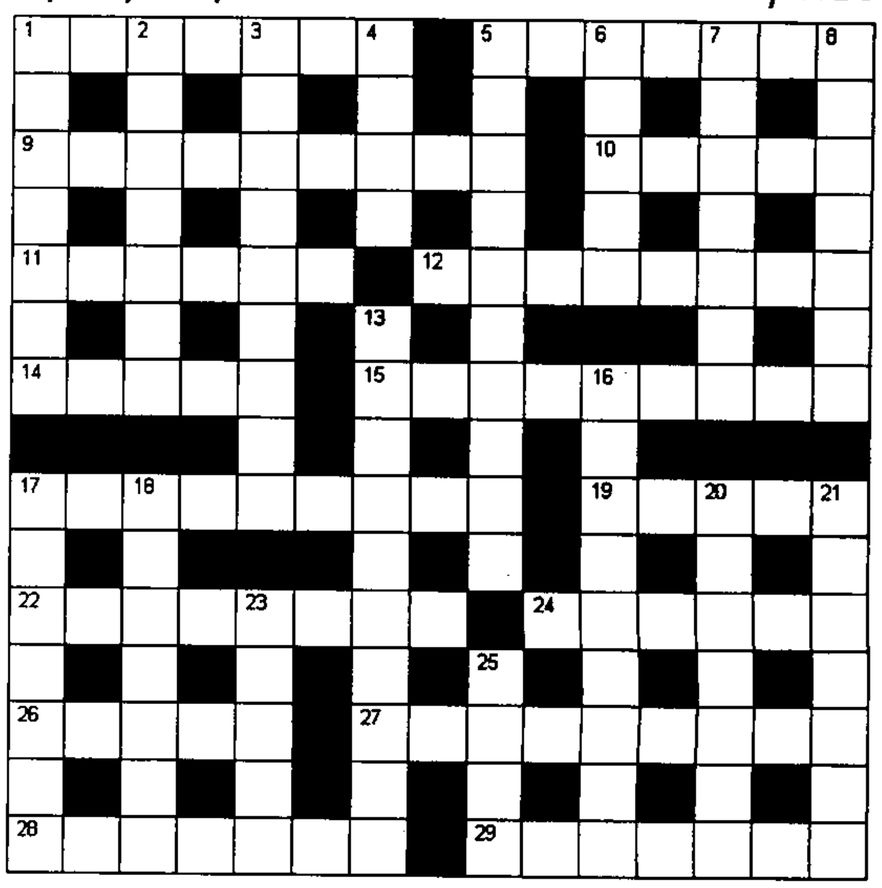
Theatre had ended in chaos. "There was lesbian lovemaking, effing and blinding, full-frontal nudity and animals, until eventually one of the dads got up, clapped his hands, and said everyone should leave. I was gobsmacked by what we'd seen."

Theatre administrator David Smith later explained what had happened. "We hire our films from the film bank at Perivale, Middlesex, and we'd asked them to supply the children's film Rainbow, starring Bob Hoskins. Unfortunately, some of the reels we were supplied with were actually from The Rainbow, which is based on a steamy novel by D. H. Lawrence. That wasn't our fault, but I regret that the necessary checks were not made before the film was screened. We have to accept responsibility for that, and I unreservedly apologise to parents and children for the subsequent unpleasantness." (Worthing Guardian, 19/3/98. Spotter: Colin Hicks)

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

EYE CROSSWORD 105

by Cyclops — *£100 prize*



ACROSS

1 Thumb stuck in awkward sod by government officials (7)
5 Lang whipped with tie of member (7)
9 (see 23)
10 Get a load of that soldier, one of several sniffing round Brenda (5)
11/27 *Eye*'s vital statistics not so sensitive? Smashing! (6,9)
12 Resort of most devious putter-up of Aitken (2,6)
14 Blair's not finished getting high on speed (3-2)
15 In bad taste? Well, that's kids! (9)
17 Tit for tat Secretary of State conceals measure on backing for example (9)
19 Drink an afterthought for such Northerners (5)
22 Brenda involved in ma's hip replacement — heavenly creatures! (8)
24 Tit roughly grabbed by one US city's rampaging leader (6)
26 Some old-style Republican, revolting type (5)
27 (see 11)
28 About to dash to do what Blair did to Labour (7)
29 Kept a vigilant watch on filth with Dettol initially (7)

DOWN

1 Top ministers getting together — for display purposes only? (7)
2 Exhibitionist who's pissed with hippy mate (7)
3 Those getting on live date during Pope Leo's tour (3,6)
4 Good getting away from Glenda's coarse material (4)
5 Guys do bugger off! (3,7)
6/20 Someone with a far from active sexual partner (12)
7 Slut, popular one, who used to score a lot (7)
8 City sees one with zip undone entering member (7)
13 Horny thing on Underground line — regularly laid in farmer's field! (4,6)
16 (see 23)
17 A tourist needs six flipping lives and balls lifted (7)
18 On rising, does a Brenda — so anything goes (2,5)
20 (see 6)
21 Gag about hiding in barn was penetrative (7)
23/16/9 Rave about managing the country air — it makes many people switch off (5,9,9)
25 City-backed politician, an arse (4)

£100 prize to first solution opened on 22.5.98. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

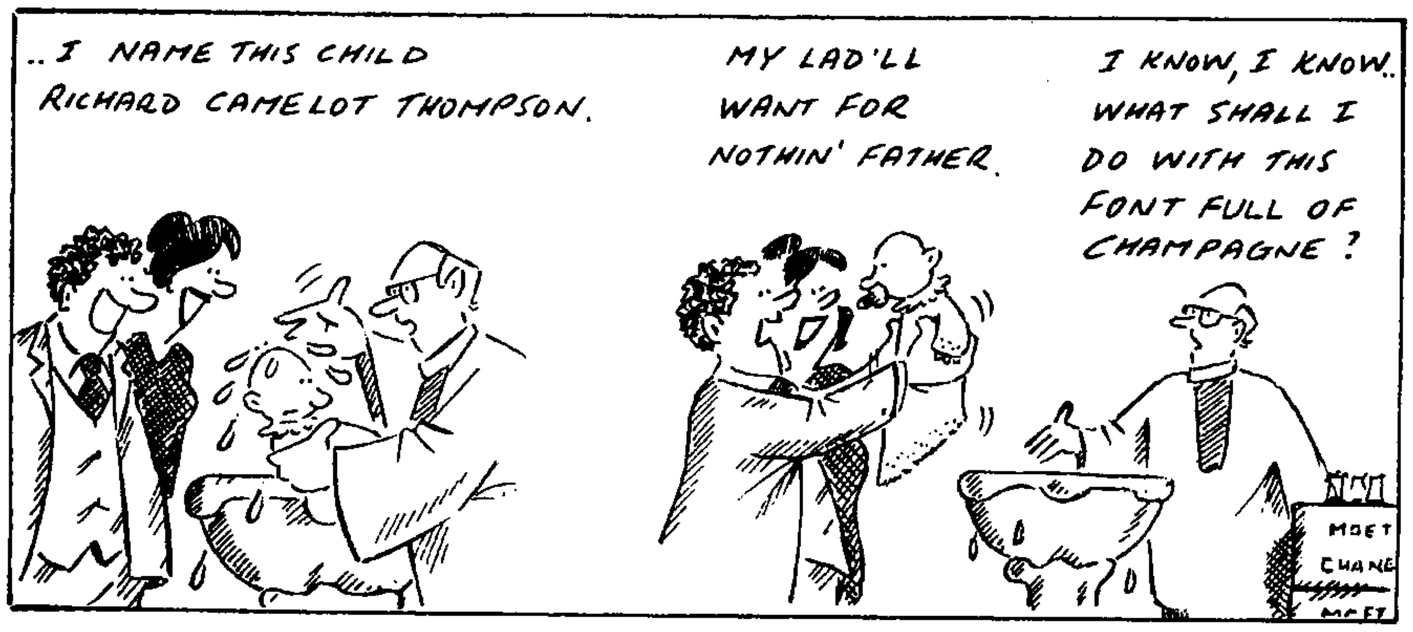
Solution to Crossword No. 104

Winner: M.J.C. EDWARDS

ACROSS: 1 Cool Britannia 8 Lager lout 9 Grail 11 Fanzine 12 Nitwits 13 Rows 15 Wet blanket 18 Hatchet-man 19 Beef 22 Workman 24 Knuckle 26 Spoof 27/10 Brahms and Liszt 28 Noel Gallagher.

DOWN: 2 Organ 3 Larkin 4 Roosevelt 5 Titan 6 Nightcap 7 In a pickle 8 Lifer 10 (see 27) 14 Water polo 16 Blackball 17 Shameful 18 Hawks 20 Freud 21 Nutmeg 23 Nubia 25 Knave.

The Lottery Winners — TURNER


..I NAME THIS CHILD RICHARD CAMELOT THOMPSON.
MY LAD'LL WANT FOR NOTHIN' FATHER.
I KNOW, I KNOW.. WHAT SHALL I DO WITH THIS FONT FULL OF CHAMPAGNE?
MOET CHANE MOET

EUROVISION CONTEST

FURY MOUNTS OVER DANA WIN

by Our Israeli Staff **F. Yuri Gellervision** and **Tel-Aviv Wogan**

ISRAEL was split in two yesterday by the victory of transsexual pop singer Princess Dana International — "The Chosen People's Princess".

Secular Israelis are delighted by the breakthrough, but Orthodox Jews were up in arms (literally).

Said Rabbi Khillah, leader of the ultra right-wing Madnos party: "This is a day of shame for Israel. It was me who should have represented my country with my popular song, 'Smite-Smite-A-Smite'! I would have appeared with my backing group, the Israeli Army, and taken Britain by force." *(Shurely 'storm'? Ed.).*

(Reuters)

GLENDA SLAGG

The Gal Who's Sexier Than Viagra!

LOLITA?!? Doesn't it make you sick with dirty old Jeremy Irons a-leerin' and a-peerin', a-moanin' and a-groanin', a-gropin' and a-mopin' *(Get on with it. Ed.)* **over his naughty nymphette in a nylon nightie!?!! What kind of example is this to set to the country, Mr Toffee-Nosed Pervert?!! It's nothing more than a green light to Britain's millions of paedophiles! Give him a clap? Clap him in Irons more like it?! Geddit?!?!**

HATS OFF to Jeremy Irons!!! At last someone has had the guts to stand up to the P.C. hysteria, the kneejerk moralists, the know-it-all do-gooders who want to ban a sensitive work of art exploring the complex issues of human sexuality?!?!

People who should know better are calling him Dirty Old Jeremy and Mr Toffee-Nose-Pervert!

What kind of language is this to describe one of Britain's finest actors?!! It's his critics who should be locked up, say I!?

LIZ HURLEY — aren'tchasick-ofher? Going to a wedding and giving everybody a peep of your panties!! For goodness sake, Liz, grow up!?!

THREE cheers for Liz Hurley for brightening up our lives by lettin' us all have a leer at her lingerie!?! And it's not just guys who like gazin' at her gusset!?? Geddit?! So they tell me!? They'll be calling her Les Hurley next!?! Geddit?!?!

READ Douglas Hurd's new book?! Me neither!?!

Here they are, Glenda's Full Maytime Montys!!

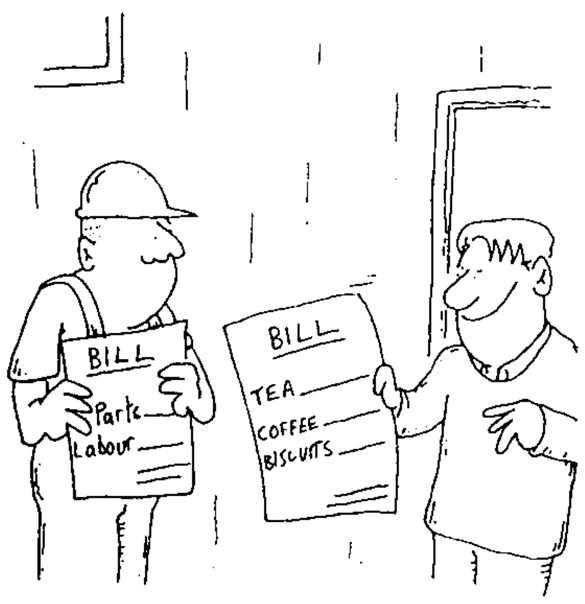
● ALAN SHEARER — I like a bit of rough near the touchline! Geddit?!

● DR MARTIN NEARY — They may not want your organ in the Abbey ducks, but there's plenty of room for it round at my place!?!

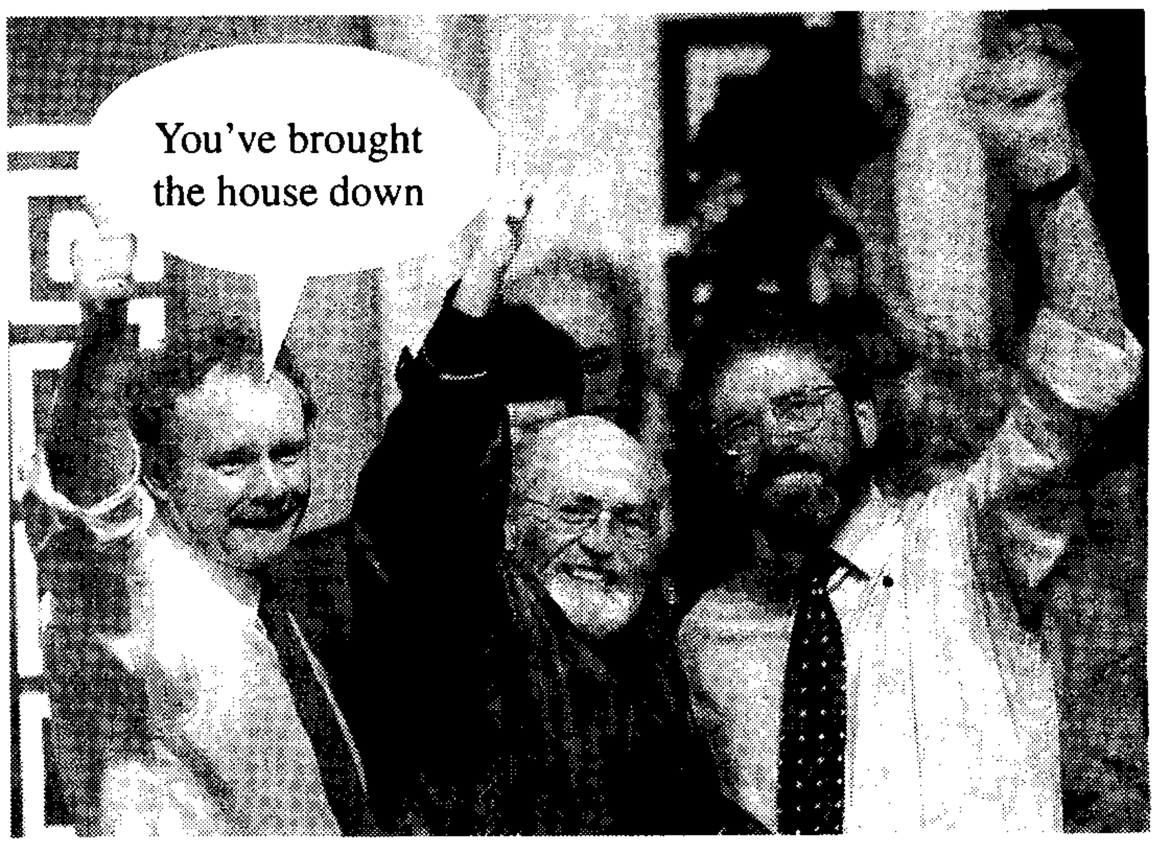
● HENRY DENT-BROCKLEHURST — crazee name, loadsamoney!! M-m-m-m-m!!!

Byeeee!!!

● Glenda Slagg has been appointed Deputy Editor of Private Eye. This complies with the new NUJ regulation that all upmarket periodicals run by middle-aged men *must* have as deputy a raunchy female columnist whose name ends in "a" (Christina, Petronella, Viagra, Glenda etc).



SINN FEIN SALUTES HERO BOMBERS



THE TIMES FRIDAY MAY 15 1998

Is Labour Washed-Up?

William Rees-Mogg

THE LABOUR Party is facing oblivion. That was the stark reality the morning after the local election results proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the death-knell is tolling for Tony Blair and his sorry band of yesterday's men.

One result alone sums it all up. The voters of Neasden South turned out in their twos and threes to confirm what I have said all along: the Tories are storming back. And there's no stopping them. The figures tell their own story.

Neasden South

M. Gerhardie (National Front)	7
Deirdre Dribble (New Labour)	58
V.J. Brocklehurst-Patel (Lib Dem)	207
C.J.P. Silvester (Conservative)	0

Turnout 0.1%

Swing: 97% to National Front

By my calculations, by the year 2957 the Conservatives will be back in Number 10 and Tony Blair will be in the dustbin of history.

© William Rees-Mad. Reprinted in the Times, Telegraph, Daily Mail, etc.

ROW OVER NEW PICTURE OF QUEEN

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hi, there!

As you can imagine, I've had a huge postbag this week, with all of you asking me the same question: "Vicar, what is the Third Way?"

Well, let me begin by telling you what it isn't!

The Third Way isn't just some mishy-mashy compromise, neither one thing nor the other!

Nor is it just some slick slogan dreamt up by advertising men to pull the wool over people's eyes!

No, it is something which goes right to the heart of everything that our new St Albion's is about!

What it isn't is just some half-way house, a fudge between two difficult choices!

In the old, traditional way of looking at things, there were only two paths in life.

One was the steep and stony path leading up to righteousness.

The other was the broad and easy road going down to "hell", as it used to be called!

But now I think we can all see that there is a third alternative, one that gets the best of both worlds!

The point about the Third Way, as I call it, is that it is steep, but not too steep; broad but not too broad; one that neither goes up nor down, but runs level, in a sensible, realistic, modern way!

The fact of the matter is that this is what most people these days are looking for, and it is what we at the new St Albion's are going to give them!

So, join me, as we travel along life's Third Way! And why not pop in on Sunday to sing along with the new chorus that I shall be accompanying on my guitar!

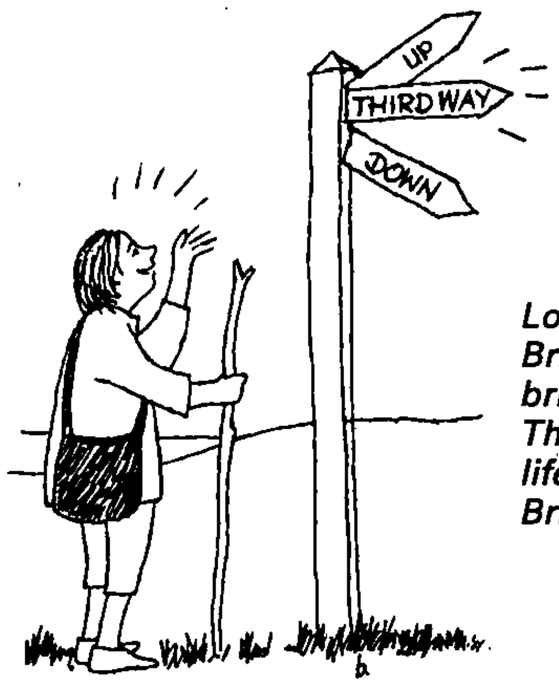
"There's a third way dawning,
Yes, a third way dawning.
There's a third way dawning
And it's coming in the morning!"

While I am on the subject of the Third Way, let me just show you how it works

in practice from one or two recent examples in my own life!

There was the silly squabble between two neighbours, Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat, who were both claiming to own the same allotment.

This had been going on for years. I couldn't watch it happen any longer, so I called them both into the vicarage and said, "Look! Why can't you two just get it sorted, like Mr Adams and Mr Trimble have done? Why don't you just shake hands and make it up?"



Local artist Brian Bagnell brings the Third Way to life. Thanks, Brian! T.B

Both of them wanted it their way. But I showed them that there was a third way, which would have solved all their problems!

Never mind that, as soon as my back was turned, Mr Netanyahu set fire to Mr Arafat's potting shed.

At least I had showed them the way — the third way!

Similarly, when I was leading the parish ecumenical European outreach team, there was a very nasty disagreement over who should be our treasurer.

The French clergyman, Cardinal Chirac, was determined to have his own way about this. Everyone else wanted our Dutch friend, Pastor Duisenberg, to have the job.

So I showed them that there was a third way! They could both have the job on a time-sharing basis, with the Frenchman having it most of the time!

When we were all having coffee afterwards, everyone came up to thank me for doing a super job. As they all said, "We can't believe what you did in there, vicar. We won't forget this in a hurry!"

And what about those "fat cats" we hear so much about nowadays?

Once again, there are two old-fashioned views about this. One is that some local businessmen are too rich and are exploiting the poor people in our community.

The other is that, without these rich people, there would be no jobs and everybody would be poor.

But isn't the truth somewhere in-between? It usually is. It's that third way again!

So what better opportunity for me to give a big welcome to the newest member of our St Albion's team, Mr Sainsbury, who has stepped down from his old job running the supermarket in the High Street, to devote his time to helping the group-ministry here in all its good work.

In the stirring words of that much-loved old hymn,

"There's a third way to
Tipperary,
There's a third way to go..."
(adapted T. Blair)

Yours, Tony

YOU WRITE...

Owing to the vicar's message taking up rather more space than usual, we are unable to print a letter from Mr Austin Mitchell complaining that the views of older parishioners are being ignored.

Mr A. Campbell, Editor

Our Thanks...

A big thank you to the former incumbent of St Albion's, the Rev. John Major, who took time out from his well-earned retirement to assist me on my very successful visit to the Northern Ireland Mission. John and I have had our differences in the past, but some things are more important than the past! You see, the Third Way again! T.B.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHURCHWARDEN

Mr Bragg was going to be honoured by the vicar with a special position in the parish hierarchy in recognition of his years of long service. But since he has been going round shouting about this in the Britannia Arms, the honour has been withdrawn. Let this be a lesson to everyone to keep their mouths shut.

P. Mandelson, Churchwarden-in-Chief

A Note From Dr Mowlam

A former assistant of mine has made the disgraceful allegation that, while conducting parish business, I often used foul language and "behaved in an un-Church-like way". All I can say is, I don't give a f***!

Dr M.O. Mowlam

(Well said, Mo! T.B.)

Talking Point

I know a lot of you feel very strongly about this woman Mary Bell and her shocking past. Well, so do I! Let's string her up! *(Luke 8.17)* T.B.

Daily Mail, Friday, May 15, 1998

Red Ken — The Nightmare Returns

by Mail Editor
FILTHY DACRE
(£650,000 a year)

FEW PEOPLE now alive remember the nightmare that was London during the 1980s' reign of terror under the hated Communist dictator Ken Livingstone.

Red Ken. They were the two most feared syllables in the English language, bringing untold misery into the lives of millions of ordinary Londoners.

But then, thanks to the fearless courage of the late Winston Thatcher, the age of Red Ken was tossed onto the dustbin of history.

But now the tinpot tyrant is set to return, to swagger through the streets of London as Mayor, accompanied by a retinue of Stalinist newts.

Lest we forget, this was the catalogue of horror in the nightmare years of the reign of King Ken Newt:

● **Billions of pounds of ratepayers' money paid to promote gay morris dancing and lesbian juggling in London's lavatories.**

● **IRA mass-murderers feted openly at lavish banquets at County Hall .**

● **Billions of rats set loose through the streets, as bodies remained unburied and mountains of rubbish towered over the rooftops.**

● **Nuclear-free car parks declared.**

● **Statues of Lenin in every square.**

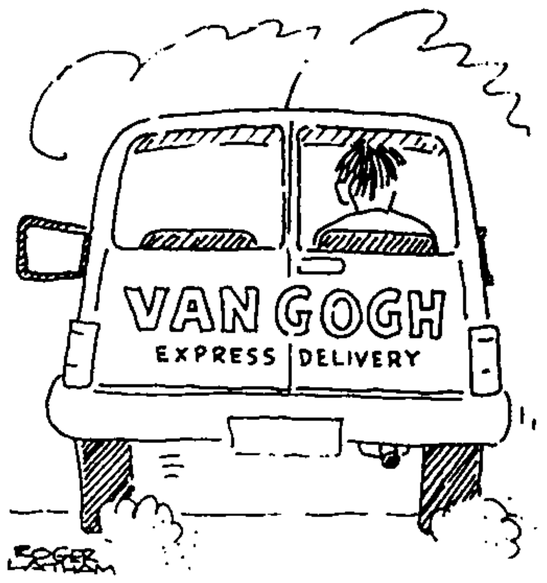
● **Thousands of Conservative intellectuals driven out into the countryside to look for agreeable second homes** *(surely "to till the fields"? Ed.)*.

● **Tube and bus fares slashed to 10p (with special rates for students and OAPs)** *(surely shome mishtake? Ed.)*.

You have been warned.

A vote for Red Ken is a vote for insanity and death. *(Will this do?)*

© Alistair Campbell, an official Labour Party article.



POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam: Lines on the appointment of Mr Wilby as Editor of the *New Statesman*

So. Peter Wilby.

You are
Editor of
The *New Statesman.*

Or at least
You soon
Wilby.

And then you
Won't be.

E.J. Thribb (circulation 17½)

NIGEL Dempshter

Arreshting Shtory

■ DRIVING back from a party, I take a detour to the police station, where I spy Police Constable Roger Perkins, son of Brian and Dorothy Perkins of retail newsagent fame, who invites me to provide a blood sample. He is accompanied by Sergeant Bob Harris, the brother of Colin Harris who is in charge of the successful paint department in the Sunbury B&Q store, who quips: "I don't care who you are, you drunken prat, you're going down."

Cell Shock

■ *To the delightful cells, where I run into none other than Jimmy McFarlane (of the Glasgow McFarlanes) who reveals to me that he will kick my fockin' head in if I don't stop whining and let him get some sleep!*

Shober as a judge

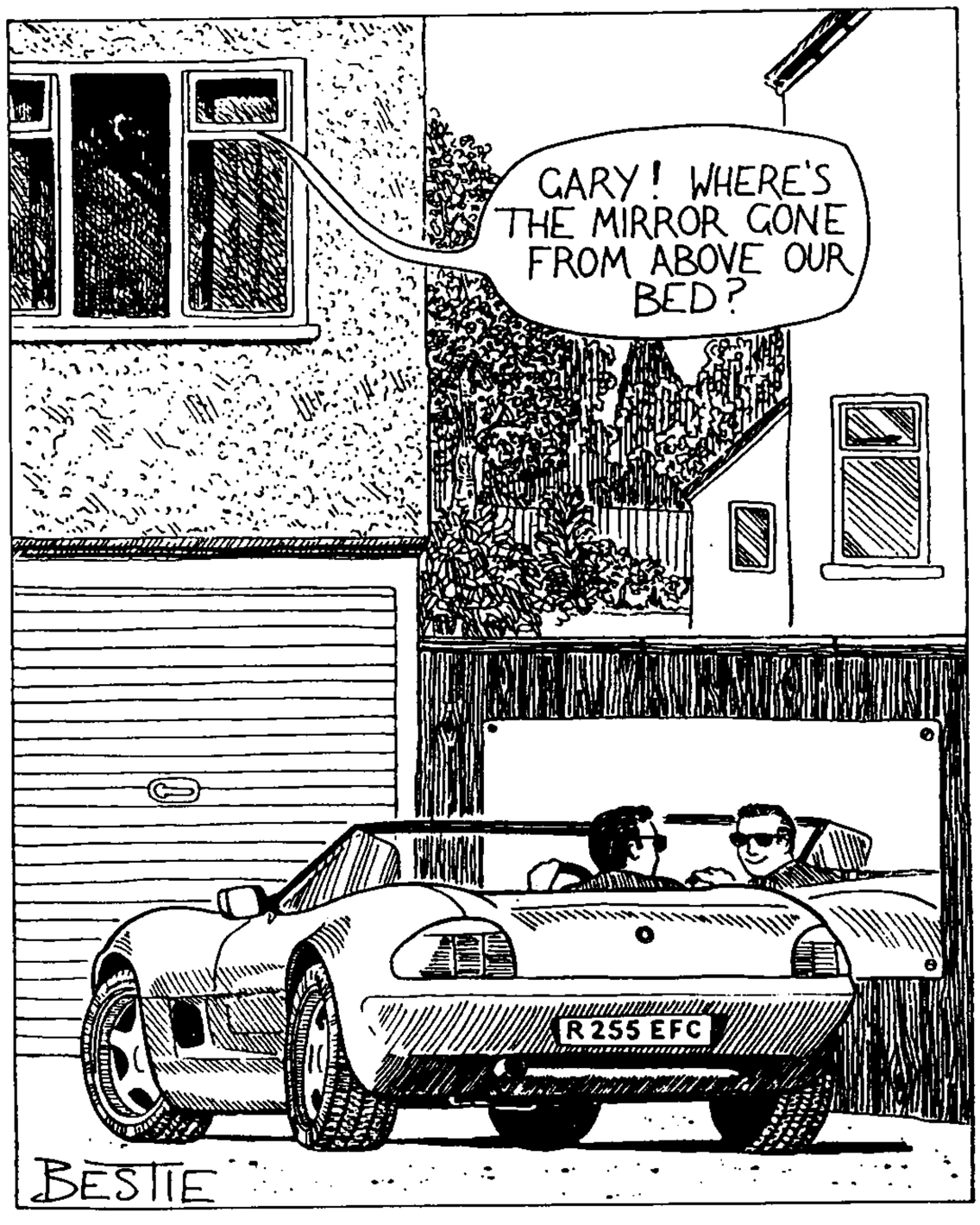
■ TO THE magistrate court where I encounter the charming Justice Melbury, whose Aunt Agatha Melbury is sister-in-law to Lady Bonjella Paget who famously danced with the Duke of Edinburgh at the Claridges Coming Out Ball in 1953.

He confides in me that I am a disgrace and should set a better example than driving about legless and being stroppy with policemen who are only trying to do their job.

The judge also has amazing news. I am to be given a huge fine and banned from driving!

P.S.sed

One for the road anyone?



How the Murdoch press would have covered his daughter's affair with Matthew Freud. What you will not read...

THE Sun

Friday, May 15, 1998 28p DEDICATED TO THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

BLONDE TV PORN HEIRESS STEALS LABOUR LOVERAT HUBBY

by Our News Staff
KELVIN MCFILTHIE

YES! The Dirty Digger's even dirtier daughter, Elizabeth Murdoch (36, 24, 36), is having non-stop nookie with sleazy government PR man, Matthew Fraud.

Whilst sex-mad Mattie's wife and kiddies are left sadly at home the predatory PR man is out on the razzle having steamy sex sessions with the busty temptress of the saucy satellite business!

With this Dish Of The Day B-Sky-B must stand for Bonking-Sky-Barmy!

ON OTHER PAGES: Nothing about this because Freud is friendly with the government and supplies stories to all the papers, even the ones Murdoch doesn't own.

THE SUN DOESN'T SAY

HOME-wrecker Elizabeth Murdoch is a public disgrace! She's about as good for marriage as her dirty dad, ie not at all!

And, as for you, Mattie-Boy, you should get your head examined — by your loony Great Grandad Sigmund! Talk about ego on your face! What a pair! And I'm not talking about your knockers darling.

NEW SEX PILL GIVES HOPE TO MIDDLE-AGED MEN

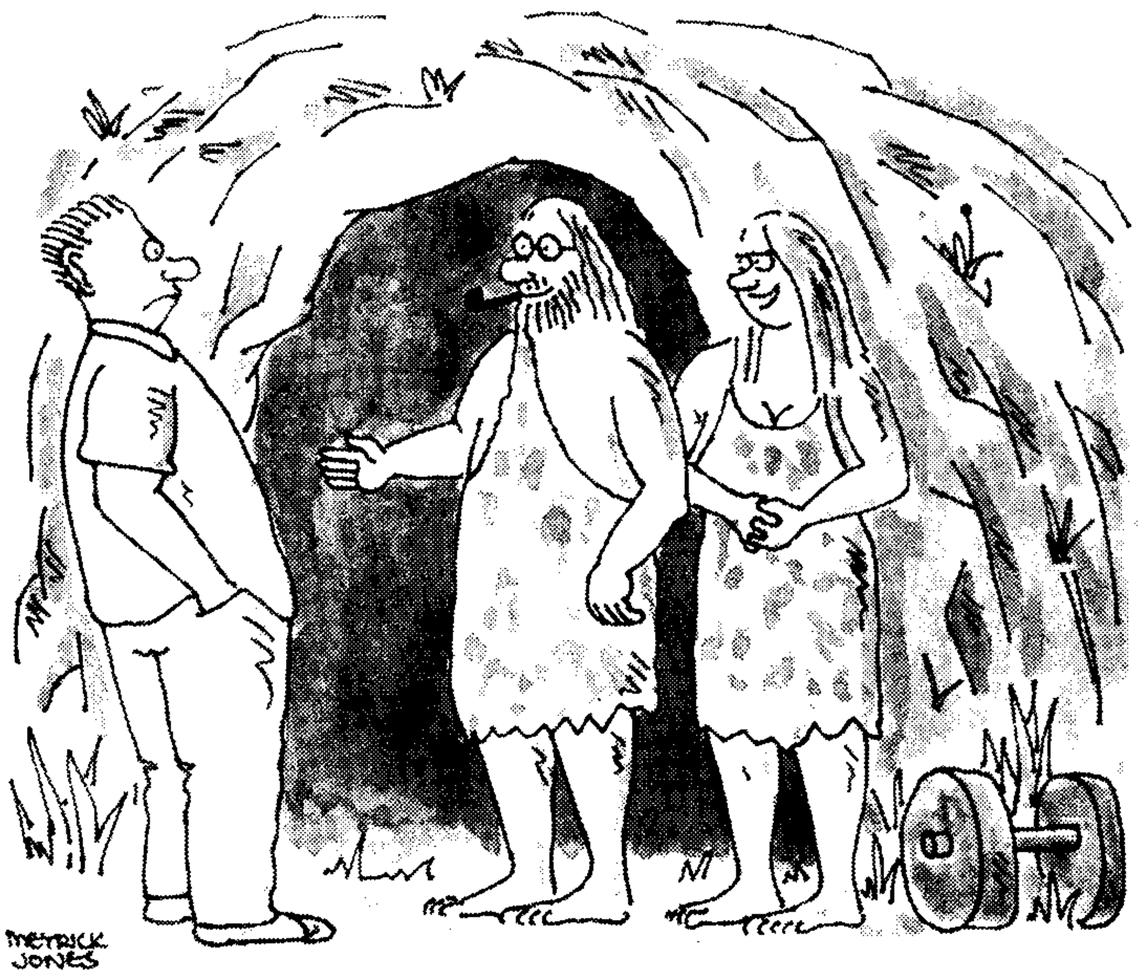
by Our Medical Staff
Dr Thomas Utterfraud

THE announcement of a new pill to cure impotence has brought relief to newspaper editors everywhere who have been increasingly suffering from limp organs.

The pill, Viagra, has already had miraculous results in America where editors have talked of its amazing power "to boost circulation" and to provide "an astonishing rise in column inches".

Editors in Britain are already swallowing the story in huge numbers. Said one happy subject who had previously been embarrassed by his poor performance (known only as Peter Stothard), "The results are fantastic. I used to be ashamed of only having sex stories once a month but now with Viagra I am at it all night and day all week."

Doctors however have warned that an overdose of Viagra could lead to side effects such as boredom, headaches and even nausea. But editors are undaunted. Said another satisfied customer (who would only give his name as Charles Moore), "I don't care what they say. I'm going for a permanent hard-sell." *(That's enough Viagra. Ed.)*



"Then Roger saw an article in the Telegraph about downshifting"

HEMPLEMAN-ADAMS ANNOUNCES NEW CHALLENGE

by Our Exploration Staff
David Frostbite

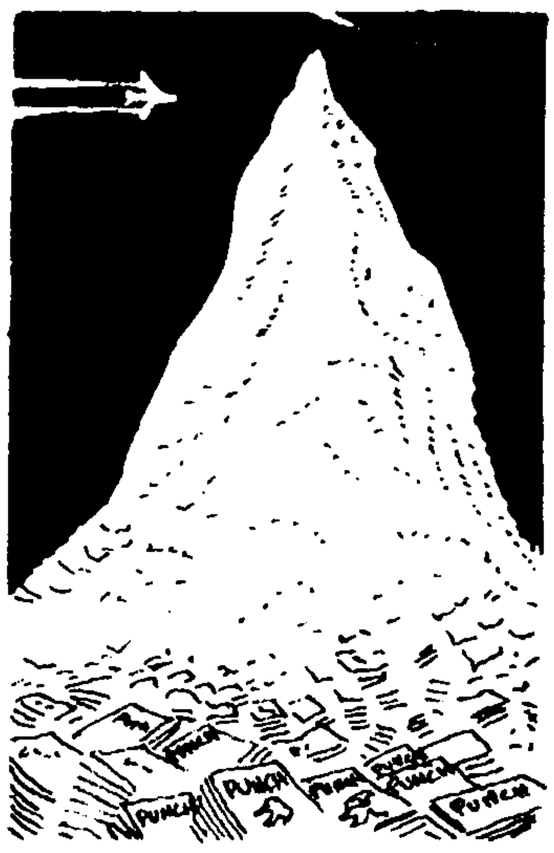
BRITAIN's foremost explorer, David Hempleman-Adams,having conquered the North Pole, the South Pole and Kilimanjaro has told reporters of his next expedition.

"It is my most challenging yet," he said. "I am going to climb the mountain of unsold copies of Punch."

Mountain Comes To Mohamed Al-Fayed

The humorous magazine mountain is ten times the height of Everest, which makes it easily the tallest peak on earth.

"It's not going to be easy," the explorer admitted, "because the mountain of pulp paper is growing all the time. Every week there is another mile to climb. Still, I think it is worth a try, unlike the magazine."



Yes! It's Britain's

BLAIRZONE

Newest Fanzine

Yesterday: ***Tone is to the left (but not any more)***

Noz

BLAIRZONE are in court this week stopping unscrupulous opportunists from releasing early Blairzone recordings. The tapes, dating back to 1995, feature Tony and the Boys singing cover versions from yesteryear. They include unpolished numbers from the old days, such as *Single Mums, I Love You* (the Late Great Spice Girls), *You Won't Get Me, I'm Part Of The Union* (the Late Great Smiths) and, of course, *Revolution* (the Very Late and Very Great John Lennon).

Says a fuzzbux Tone, "We don't do this stuff any more.

Tourz

Tone is currently doing a whistle-stop tour of Belfast, giggin' with old rival bluesman Johnny B. Major. Together they are playing non-stop "Yes" songs with support from Gerry and the Peacemakers (formerly Gerry and the Bombmakers). Sadly, Orange Juice have dropped out preferring to tour solo with their marching song "Rip It Up".

Tone's message after a week long Peace 'n' Love in is simple: "If John and I can be mates, after all our history of slaggin' each other off, why can't everyone else?"

Says Blairzone's PR manager: "All we are saying, is give the Peace Prize to Tony."

Tone's Thought For Monetary Union

In the words of the immortal Gilbert O'Sullivan, *"Ooh-Wacka-Doo-Wacka-Day"*. Makes you think!

Late News

BORIS JOHNSON'S COLUMN IS 'A FRAUD'

THE media world was rocked today by the shock revelation that Boris Johnson "prepares" his column in advance.

"It's all fixed," said an ashen-faced insider. "It appears to be a spontaneous jumble of nonsense that he's thought up on the spur of the moment — but this is just a clever con-trick. In fact, it's all 'prepared' over the course of the day."

A shock "exclusive" in all the newspapers reveals the cynical truth behind the so-called "column" — that Johnson knows in advance — sometimes for several minutes — what he is going to write.

Daily Telegraph readers openly wept in the streets as they found out what really happens on the day:

11 am: Boris gets up and reads the papers.

11.03 am: He then goes for lunch.

3 - 5 pm: He then "writes" the column, making copious notes and carefully typing it out. Sometimes sentences are re-written over and over again until they make sense.

5 - 12 am: The words are then given to a "sub-editor" who edits out the bad bits and artificially "improves" the end result.

To the unsuspecting reader, it looks like the clever young journalist has just dashed off some embittered rubbish because he is late for his Spectator deadline.

If only they knew the horrific truth. © Guppy Productions PLC

(This article first appeared in 1896)

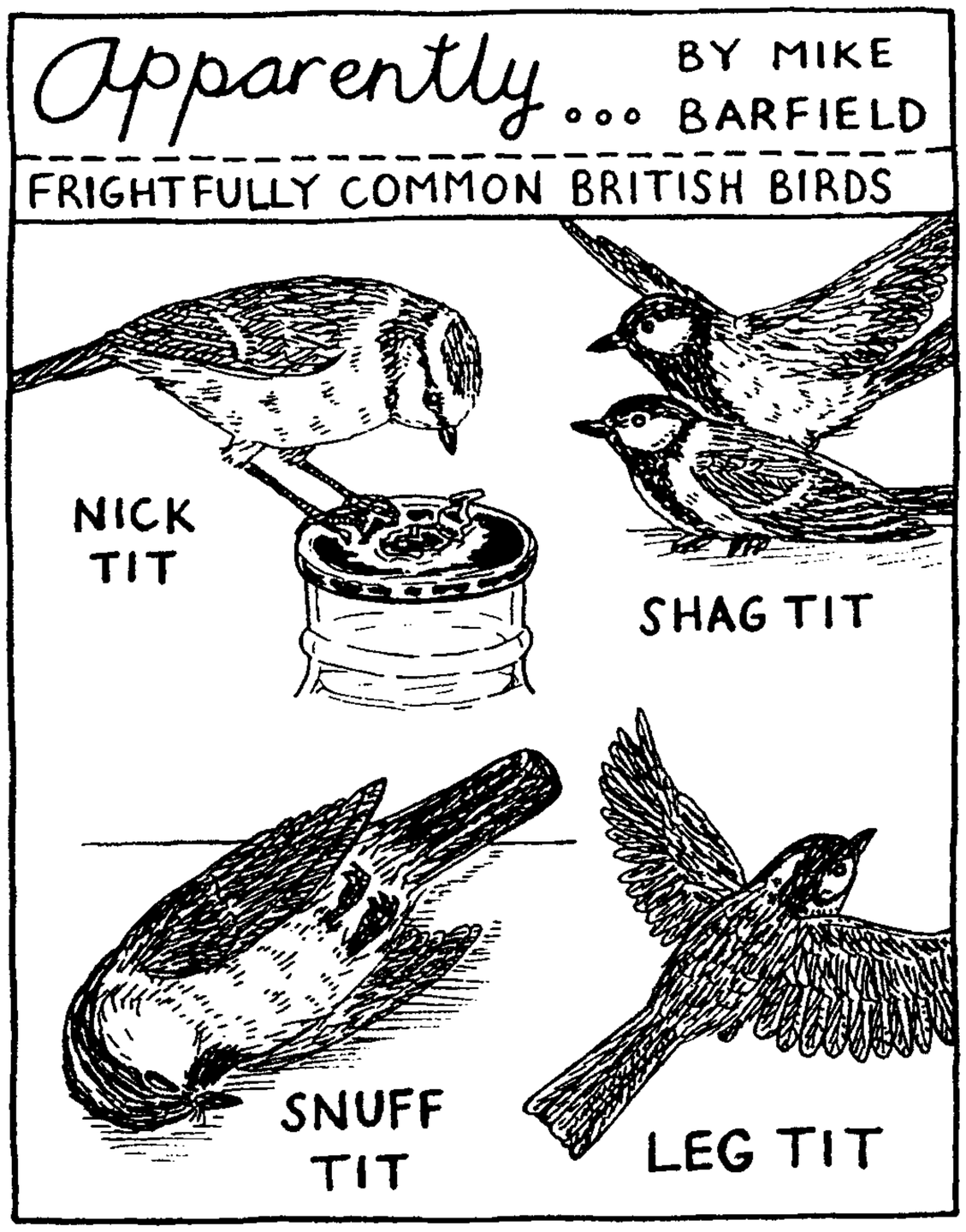
CARLTON 'FAKE' ALLEGATION

A REPORT has uncovered evidence that suggests Carlton Television is nothing more than a "fake" television company, which has somehow managed to persuade the public that it is a legitimate source of quality programming.

One of those responsible for uncovering the evidence tells of the in-depth research which went into scooping the story: "We watched Carlton on several occasions and, to our horror, the only kind of programming they could offer consisted of: a fly-on-the-wall documentary about people planting landmines in their neighbours' back gardens; something which looked half-decent, but turned out to be a beer commercial; and, finally, a Police Academy sequel shown either side of the News At Ten."

At Stratford-upon-Avon, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre was delugedby 12ft of water and performances of The Tempest and The Merchant of Venice were cancelled until Monday.

Sunday Times



In The Courts

The Case of the Spiggy Tapes

Day 94. Before Mr Justice Cocklecarrot

Sir Hartley Redface QC *(appearing for Mr Spigismond Topes)*: M'Lud, my client is one of the most distinguished composers and musicians of this century or any other. He seeks to injunct Mr Kevin Anorak of Crap Records (Watford) Ltd from seeking to profit from the copying, mechanical reproduction or sale of an electric tape recording made on 21 November 1961 in a hotel bedroom in Hamburg, when my client and his colleagues in the singing group, then known as "Spiggy and the Topemen" — later of course, as I hardly need remind this Court, let alone your Lordship, as "The Turds" — gave a rendition of a well-known song of the time, "Hugga-Bugga-Bim-Bam-Boogie" while in a condition of advanced inebriation, and while undergoing hallucinatory experiences in the company of a number of female admirers. M'Lud, may I at this point be permitted to allow the Court to hear the recording in question?

Mr Justice Cocklecarrot: Certainly not. We have suffered enough, having to listen to your speech.

Sir Hartley: I am obliged to your Lordship.

(Sir Spiggy was then called to the stand)

Sir Hartley: Can you tell the Court in your own words exactly what happened on the night of 21 November 1961?

Sir Spigismond: Certainly not. I cannot remember a thing about that night, or indeed any other. But it is not in the artistic interests of The Turds for Mr Anorak to see this tape released, without any royalties accruing thereby to myself or the surviving members of the most famous popular singing group in the history of the world. My accountant Mr Ernst Young tells me he has calculated that we could be missing out on artists' royalties amounting to the sum of no less than 47p, which to my mind, frankly, such as it is these days, would be totally outrageous. *(Continued Court 94)*

Eye Pick Of The Proms

July 12: First Night. Aria "The Titanic" with Celine Dion (soprano) (arr. I.C. Berg)

24 July: A Celebration Of Favourite Advertising Theme Tunes, include Papa and Nicole Suite, Delibes' British Airways duet, Bach's Hamlet Air and Karl Orff's Old Spice Medley.

7 August: "The Teletubbies Say Hullo Promenaders" (for the first time on stage). The lovable TV characters sing their favourite Bob Marley reggae hits, introduced by Lord Bragg of Southbank. *(That's enough Proms.)*

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94: A Service For The Sacking Of A Much-Loved Organist *(for use in Abbeys)*

The Dean *(for it is he)*: Dearly not-very-beloved. We are gathered here today to humiliate the organist, ——— *(Here he may say Martin or Neary)*. Normally at this point we would sing a hymn, but due to unforeseen circumstances, this will not be possible.

(Parents of the choir shall then process out in protest)

The Responses

The Dean: Who writeth to the Times in support of myself?

The Chapter: We do, and also to the Telegraph.

The Dean: Why do you so do?

The Chapter: Because otherwise we might get the sack as well.

The Reading

(taken from The Book of Job Centre, Chapter P45)

"Verily, I say to you, if thy organist offend thee, thou shalt cut him off without a penny, and the woman that is with him also. And they shall be cast into outer darkness, and there shall be much wailing and writing to the Daily Telegraph" *(You've done that bit. God.)*.

The Dismissal

The Dean: You're fired, all of you. Especially the old ones.

All: You bastard.

A Prayer For The Queen

The organist shall then pray for the Queen to intervene on his behalf and sack the Dean.

Another Prayer For The Queen

The Royal Chaplain, Canon Eric James, shall then pray for the Queen to be sacked on the grounds that she is old and unelected. The congregation shall then sing, unaccompanied, the hymn "Neary, my God to thee" *(Wesley, Carr)*.

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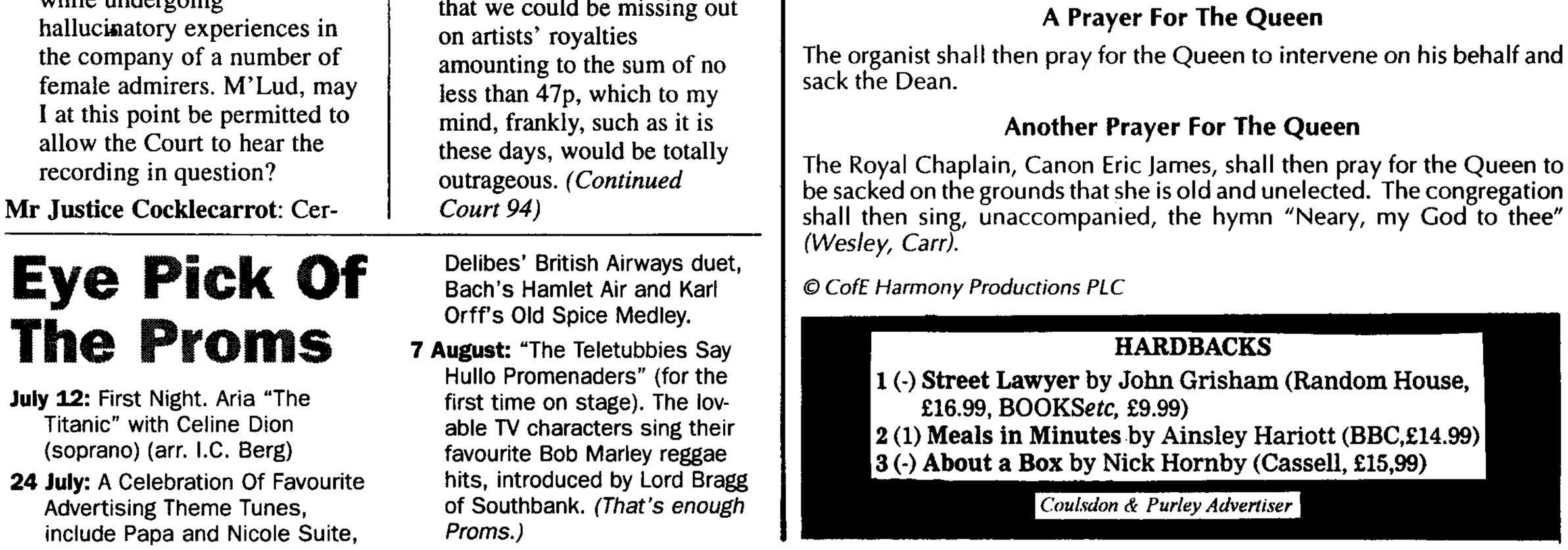
HARDBACKS

1 (-) **Street Lawyer** by John Grisham (Random House, £16.99, BOOKS*etc*, £9.99)
2 (1) **Meals in Minutes** by Ainsley Hariott (BBC,£14.99)
3 (-) **About a Box** by Nick Hornby (Cassell, £15,99)

Coulsdon & Purley Advertiser

Celeb


I MADE A COMPLETE IDIOT OF MYSELF ON T.V. LAST NIGHT.
IT WASN'T MY FAULT. IT WAS WHAT SOME BIRD GAVE ME.
I HAD THREE 'J's AND A LOAD OF 'E's... I WAS ALL OVER THE PLACE.
SOUNDS A DISASTROUS COMBINATION, SIR.
YEAH. YOU TRY. MAKING A WORD OUT OF THAT LOT.
I DID WARN YOU ABOUT APPEARING ON THIS SHOW, SIR...
CELEBRITY COUNTDOWN
JEJEJEEEE

"The tortoise has come out of hibernation!"

WE TRACK DOWN BELL AND DAUGHTER

by **Lynchtime O'Booze**

YESTERDAY afternoon in a quiet Cheshire village a nationwide search came to a dramatic end.

At last I discovered the secret whereabouts of the most wanted couple in Britain.

The trail ended outside a tiny village church where the two runaways emerged blinking guiltily into the light in front of hundreds of journalists.

Bell Looney

Up to this moment, little Melinda Bell had lived her life in a state of blissful ignorance.

She innocently believed that her father was a respected journalist working abroad for the BBC.

Now at last she must face the horrible truth.

That the parent she loved is a convicted Member of Parliament in a white suit, who is paying his debt to society by serving five years in a grim prison with some of the most hated men in Britain.

It was a shock from which she may never recover.

Only several years of round-the-clock counselling will help her come to terms with the sordid truth which I was the first to reveal to her on the day of her wedding.

EURO-VISION CONTEST ENDS IN FUDGE

by Our Brussels Staff **Boris and Ulrika Johnson**

THE GREAT Euro contest ended in farce tonight, when the winning Dutch entry, *My Old Bank Manager's A Dutchman (He Wears A Dutchman's Cap),* **was forced to share the prize with the French entry,** *Unfrere Jacques.*

The British judge, Mr Tony Blair, allowed the French to take the coveted Eurobank prize away from the original Dutch winner, after he had been pummelled to the floor and shouted at in French for several hours.

Winner Takes Nothing

There was confusion in the closing stages of the contest when the organisers first announced that for the first time Holland had been voted number one with an astonishing 14 points (the maximum possible was 15).

The French entry received only one vote, from the French judge Monsieur Chirac.

But the doors then closed and there were sounds of heated argument and scuffles lasting until 2 o'clock in the morning.

Waterloo-ser

The judges then re-emerged to announce that the Dutch winner was going to step down voluntarily after four minutes.

The French contestant would then be declared the winner for the rest of time *(surely 'the year'? Ed.)*.

Mr Tony Blair, president of the judges, was quick to assure millions of viewers all over Europe that this was "the best possible result for everyone".

"The verdict," he said, "is extremely exciting and fair.

"The Eurovision song contest is no longer a matter of one country winning or losing.

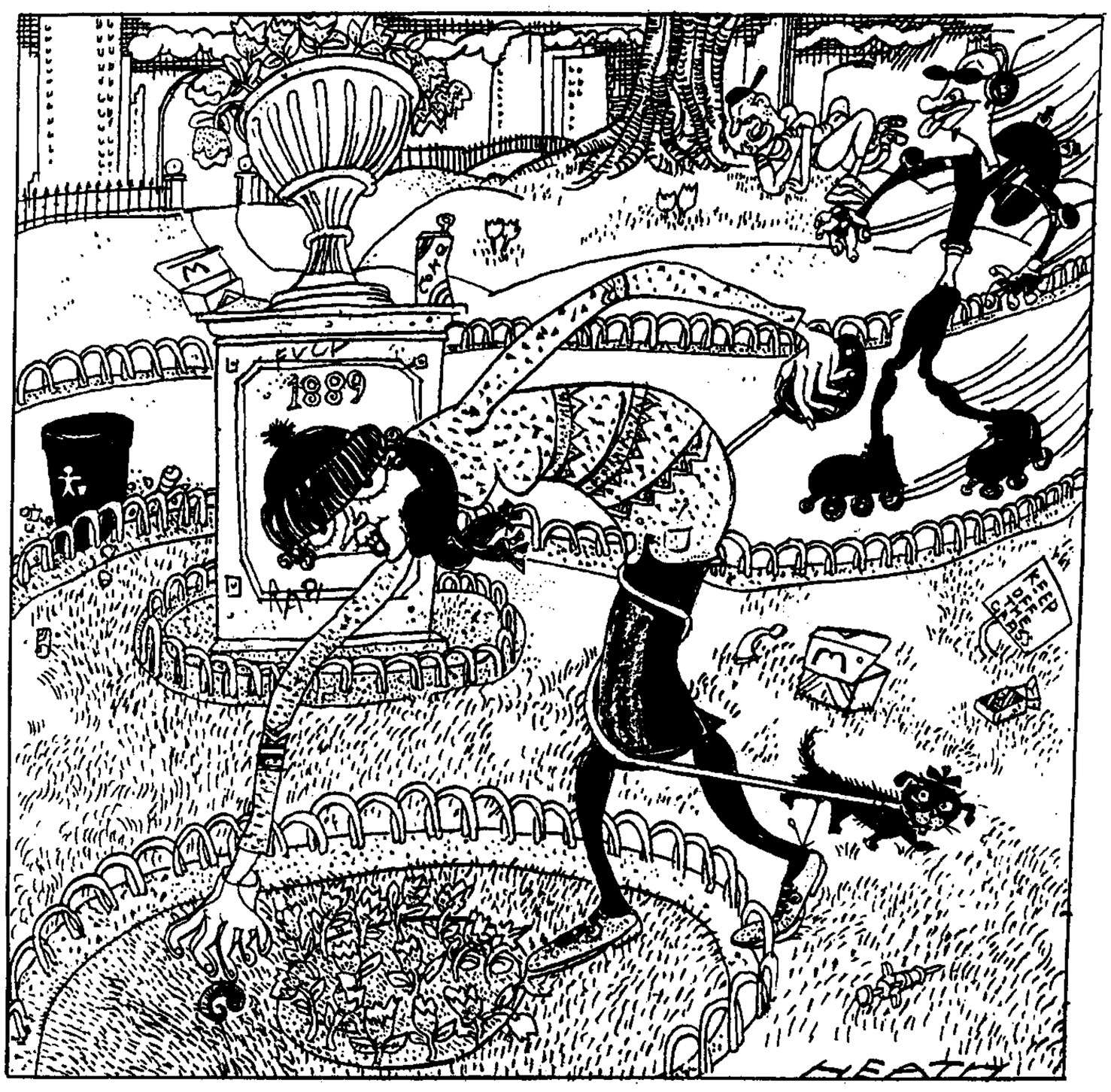
"There is now a third way."

Those Losing Entries In Full

- I Did It Third Way: **Tony Blair**, UK (nul points)
- Deutschmark Unter Alles: **Ex-King Kohl**, Germany (nul points)
- We'll Meet The Convergence Criteria: **Dame Lira In**, Italy (nul points)
- Boom-Bang-A-Bust: **Abba Dabba Do**, Sweden (nul points)
- When Irish Ayes Are Voting: **Jimmy Joyce and the Dubliners** (nul points) *(That's enough rotten songs. Ed.)*

Harry Enfield's **Bores** Drawn by **Michael Heath** **No. 36 Animal Magic**

"Binky's not a happy dog today are you darling? he's cross with Mummy because he came in to my room this morning he said 'morning Mummy time to play' & wuffed up on Mummy's bed but it was only 6 o'clock & naughty Mummy thought it was too early to get up no matter how hard Binky licked her face & so the poor darling had to punish Mummy by doing a wee on the bedspread because all the time Binky was popping to go wasn't he? & Mummy tried to make it all better by giving him Binky's special bacon breakfast but Binky said 'No Mummy, I'm not going to forgive you that easily' & didn't touch it & he scratched at the door & said 'Mummy's going to have to take me for a long long walk if she wants me to kiss & make up' so we've been round the park three times already & we've had a lovely time haven't we? 'Yes I have I've seen Towser & played with Toby & Tara & I'm quite puffed out now & Mummy's going to have to take me home in a minute I've worked up a jolly good appetite for Binky's special bacon breakfast which I'll eat now because I've forgiven naughty Mummy haven't I? — Oh dear naughty Mummy stood still for too long & Binky thought she was a lamppost — what a bad Mummy you've got you'd better take her home..."



DIARY

Heed well the wisdom of our ancestors, my sons and daughters, for it is rough-hewn by time. "The birdy does not sit on the tree; it is the tree that sits on the birdy." The wise man will recognise this as correct in all its essentials. And another old African saying also proves as true today as it ever was: "He travels furthest who never leaves his homestead." For the human heart is a rock containing much water and bundles of sweet fruits; a rock that can soar in the air, flying higher than the steepest lakes. And before it comes to rest, this rock will gallop as fast as a speckled hen, eager to rest its head on the distant murmur of soft glades. So heed ye well the wisdom of our ancestors. And learn.

MAYA ANGELOU

Let us listen awhile, for those without ears shall never hear. When I was but a little bitty girl, I would sit at the feet of my Grandmother, ready for my lessons.

"Tell me 'bout the time you wuz a little girl, Granmaw" I'd beg her. And as she opened her mouth, I'd remind her that I was now a little girl, just as she'd once been.

"That's true, honey," she'd say, "And when ah was 'bout your age, I —"

"And you know what I've learnt from being a little girl, Granmawmaw?" I would interject.

"Why, no, honey, I don't, but when ah was jist 'bout your age I —"

"I've learned, Grandmawmaw, that to be seven years of age on this extraordinary planet of ours, with its mountains and its valleys, its deserts and its lakes, its skyscrapers and its bungalows, its wealthy and its downtrodden, its honey-bees buzzing on scented lilac in the warmth of the summer breeze, its lovers whispering sweet nothings to each other amidst the ceaseless clamour of the city turmoil, its soaring beauty — as beautiful a beauty as ever beauteous beauty was beautiful — and its grinding poverty, particularly among the poor — why, Grandmawmaw, I've learned that to be seven years of age on this extraordinary planet is —"

But at this point, I would glance over at my Grandmother, and I would notice that her eyes were firmly closed, with cacophonous snores emerging like paddle steamers on the old Mississippi from her mouth.

"Wake up, Grandmawmaw!" I would thereby exclaim. But in the soundness of her sleep she would remain deaf to my lessons. Sad to relate, my grandmother died without ever learning anything from the little girl who would one day grow up to be Dr Maya Angelou, professor, poet, Grammy-winner, Emmy-winner, Laureate to the nation. Truly, those without ears will never hear.

There is an old African saying, never truer today than yesterday or the day before: "The stony path is best travelled with bare feet." Africa — my Africa — is rich in such wisdom. It is the heartland of beauty, the boiling-pot of spirituality, the very crucible of all art and literature. Believe me, there is no greater writer or painter who is not at heart an African. "To be or not to be" — the rich reggae rhythm is undeniable. The culture of Africa — simple, heartfelt, full of grace and hope — is everything that America's is not. And that is why I chose for my present homestead a dwelling in North Carolina with the deepest, bluest, longest, widest, most heatingdest swimming-pool you ever did see. For only by sitting in a beautiful sun-lounger, as black as my people but with an orange trim, surrounding myself with such bluey warmth, such warm blueyness, such bluthy warmeyness, can I feel truly back among my people in Africa, bathing in their grace, their simplicity, their great freedom from earthly possessions.

Mine was the privilege that momentous day in our nation's history to orate a poem at the inauguration of President Bill Clinton, a poem both as forceful and full of force as the strongest breeze. And I recite it again today, six long, short, long years later, rewritten and reworked to make it fly with the wings of a gazelle across the stage of our times:

Lift up your face, America, you have a
piercing need
To breathe awhile as your President signs
A hefty wad of worthy documentation
Entrusted to his doughty hand by a nation
Kneeling before him in gratitude.
At last he has done with his signing;
open wide your lips,
To accommodate the hard-pressed vessel
Heading fast towards its port in these
storm-tossed times.
For his bright new morning glory is dawning
just for you
And, if faced with courage, its passion spent,
need not be
Faced again until the dawn. After which
His lawyers will deny every charge you care to
make, you dumb-ass ho.
Good Morning America!

Oprah Winfrey. Just two short words, one of five letters, the other of seven letters. But with a meaning deeper than the deepest glacier, a reverberation lower than the highest bridge. In Africa, there is an old saying, passed down to us from village ancestors long gone. "On a rainy afternoon, the talk-show host doth occupy the time of the bored." Never have these true words been truer of anyone than of Oprah. Why, even the letters of her Christian name spell "A Hoper", leastways once you've re-shuffled them and added an "e" just before the final "r".

Oprah goes where the fearful will not tread. Her eyes fill with salty tears — tears rough-hewn from strong onions cultivated in the deepest earth of her own dreams — as she listens with ears athwart to what the poor and the downtrodden have to tell us. After they have finished telling their tales, Oprah looks with downcast eyes towards we, her viewers. "Don't go away," she says, caringly, "We'll be back after this short break."

One day, we, the African-Americans, will all have our own talk-shows, we will all listen while others weep and groan, we will all rise up those studio staircases, our microphones firmly in our hands. But until that day comes we would do well to view Oprah, all day, every day, and to respect that old saying from my African homeland: "The man who wears his shoe on his ear will remain deaf to the sound of his feet." Bless you, my children.

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY
THERE HAVE BEEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIS 'SKINNY MODEL WITH WATCH ON HER ARM' CAMPAIGN
Put Some Weight On
Accurist
IT'S SENDING OUT THE WRONG SIGNALS...
EVERYBODY KNOWS MODELS CAN'T TELL THE TIME!
MMMM...
Put Some Weight On
Accurist

June 1
Worcestershite – Aon Trophy
(Taunton)
Somerset County Cricket Club fixtures

GENT young 60, OHAC, static caravan, likes karaoke, dancing, seeks lay, children no problem.
Liverpool Echo

3 Seater settee. 2 2 seater settee. all fully leather. brand new. never used. worth £2000 or more. £150 no offers. genuine reason for sale because stolen.
Birmingham Bargain Pages

CHESTER DRAWERS oak barley twist legs £50
Manchester Evening News

Literary Review

Too close for comfort

Cries Unheard

Gitta Sereny
(Macmillan, £20)

AND so, as usually happens in these cases, the dust settles, the braying of the tabloid donkeys recedes, a number of warped and fragile lives are left even more grimly exposed than they were to begin with, and all that remains is a book. What kind of a book? Is it any good? Would you — would anyone — want to read it?

Over the past 30 years there have been several fairly decent books about murderers — by which I mean unsensational, framed in the social and economic context of which they were a part, meditative, ostentatiously distanced from the yellow press feeding frenzy. Examples might include Gordon Burn's study of the Yorkshire Ripper, *somebody's husband, somebody's son...*, Brian Masters on Dennis Nilson, or, going back a bit, Emlyn Williams's book on the Moors Murderers. Now, in the wake of the Bulger case, along rolls the story of an 11 year old from Tyneside who asphyxiated two small boys back in 1968, billed both as an exposé of the childhood traumas that led Mary Bell to do what she did and as a red-hot indictment of a legal system that treats bewildered youngsters by adult criteria.

For all Gitta Sereny's lavish track record, and the obvious sincerity on display, *Cries Unheard* isn't remotely in the Burns/Masters class. Structurally, the thing is a curiosity — starting with the murders, resumé-ing the trial and then taking us through the events of Bell's subsequent career in reform schools and penal institutions before whisking back to the ghastly cruelties inflicted on her by her callous — and safely dead — mother. And yet, stories like Bell's stand or fall on their chronological pattern, and the recreation of the bizarre, lop-sided world out of which such tragedies grow. *somebody's husband, somebody's son...*, for instance, sedulously reassembled a whole environment which the figure of Peter Sutcliffe eventually emerged to dominate, and the characterisation was that much more impressive in the light of the homework done. Sereny, on the other hand, simply sat the 40-year-old Mary Bell down in front of a tape recorder.

Or rather she didn't. As an investigative journalist of high repute, Sereny undoubtedly fancies herself a bit, and her book, consequently, is a series of personal appearances: author at the original court proceedings; author opening the door to distressed collaborator; author offering comfort and succour. While this double billing nods at some kind of *rapport*, its ultimate effect, oddly enough, is to distance the subject from the action, to make her less not more real to the reader. Instead of creating a vision of an aloof and solitary denizen prowling her self-absorbed world, Sereny is constantly holding her hand, making her ordinary when she and what she did were patently *extra* ordinary.

Which is Sereny's point, you suppose. Here is an "ordinary" person, the message runs, driven to diabolical wickedness by the treatment she received from the one woman who should have loved her. At the same time, the causative link between Bell's own pain and the hurt she herself inflicted is so perfunctory — there is hardly any real insight into the *reasons* Bell acted as she did — as to raise lurking suspicions of the whole approach. Essentially Sereny is trying to demythologise this gruesome affair, to unravel it beneath by the light of reason rather than emit tabloid squeaks about "evil". But what emerges is something — and somebody — whose motivation is not truly explained by the analytical tools so resolutely brought forth.

There's also the question of Bell herself. Sereny claims more than once that she "used" Bell in pursuit of her own investigative ends. Exploitation can work both ways, though, and given the trouble the younger Mary Bell had in distinguishing fact from fancy one has to ask whether she's always a reliable witness. One thing is certain — that the subject has had a wretched life. Has Sereny done anything to ameliorate it by writing *Cries Unheard*? And — a much, much less important question — is it a particularly good book? No on both counts, I fear. No harm in getting close to one's subject, of course, but there are times when the truth, not to mention the trivial requirements of art, require you to stand slightly further away.

BRIDGET JONES' DAIRY

What you didn't miss, Part 94

INFIDELITY BY HANIF KURASHER

THIS is the saddest night, for I am writing a novel. Tomorrow I shall leave the woman with whom I have lived for six years, and our children, write the experience up in the cool, impersonal prose you see before you, and sell the resulting manuscript to Faber & Faber for a very large sum of money.

I cannot pretend I do so with equanimity. To leave is to forfeit a part of oneself, to die a little. In art there lies only the residue of spent tears. My books are full of these aphorisms. *Being a writer means never having to say you're sorry. Fais ce que voudras.* Or did Rabelais say that? It does not matter.

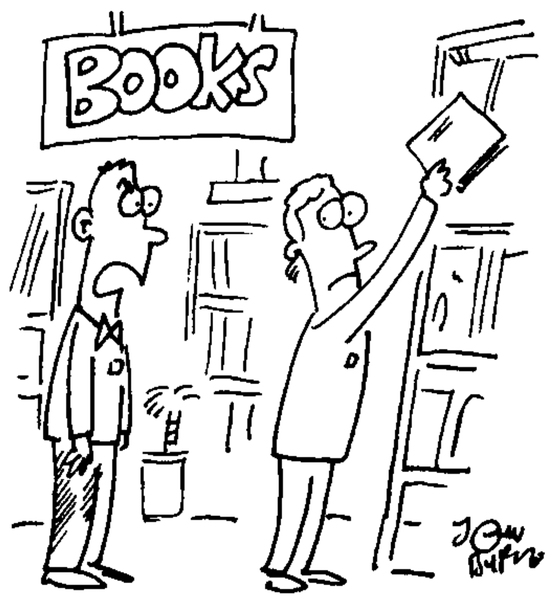
But it is quite irrevocable. I shall go and not come back. In moving, one changes. One becomes something one is not. And so I shall leave this worn-down, twilit place where I write my film scripts and my books and grant misleading interviews about my family to sympathetic friends on the liberal broadsheets for another place where I can write my film scripts and my books and grant misleading interviews about my family to sympathetic friends on the liberal broadsheets.

There is no such thing as water. It is only melted ice.

And yes I am angry. Sometimes I have considered this woman with whom I have condescended to share this cool and vibrant life, and marvelled at the irritations she has foisted on me over the years. Those neon-lit, searing years of early middle age when I could have been experimenting with drugs or appearing on Channel Four arts programmes. The meals she insisted on cooking me, the slavish interest in the household chores. Could she not have realised how such intrusions grated on my sensitive spirit?

This is all so *important*.

And our children? Children are younger versions of ourselves. They are like us, only smaller. My love for them — a blind, bursting, devoted love — is mixed with the thought that their nocturnal vomitings and urinations are incompatible with the awesome trajectory of my desires. And so, like my talent, I shall leave and not come back.

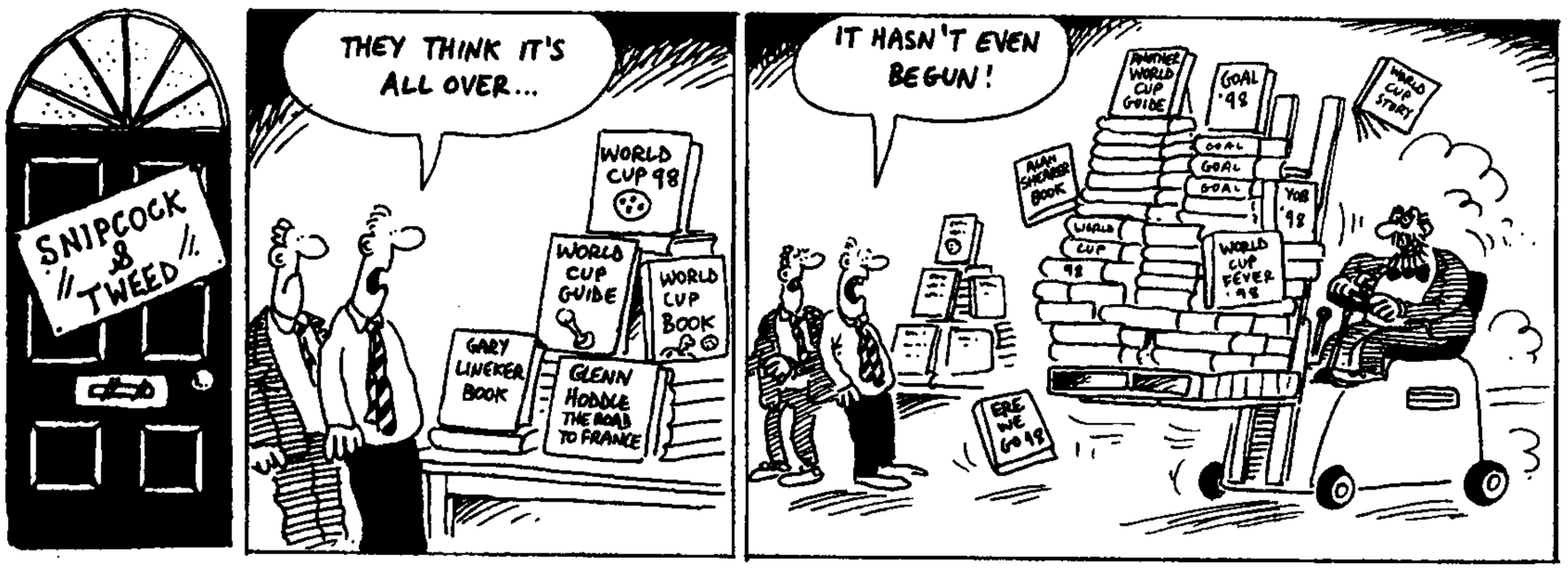


"Will you stop rearranging that bloody Feng Shui section!"

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ **JOSEPHINE Hart's *The Stillest Day* is generally regarded as the worst novel published in Britain since *Oblivion* by, er, Josephine Hart.**

One critic, however, disagrees: John Bayley, who told *Times* readers that *The Stillest Day* was "as rich in disturbing overtones as it is rare in aesthetic originality". So continues a series of companionable gestures that began when Iris Murdoch, Bayley's wife and Hart's friend, gave a plug for the author's first novel, *Damage*.



■ *HANIF Kureishi's new novel* Intimacy *has divided staff at publisher Faber.*

Half of them felt guilty that Kureishi's account of how he dumped his ex-wife was allowed to be published masquerading as fiction. To try to make amends, some of the more remorseful even took the ex-Mrs K out for lunch.

However much publicity the book (and Faber) have enjoyed, staff remain furious at their boss Matthew Evans for deciding to publish the confessional in the first place.

'Bookworm'

footnotes

MERGER MOST FOUL

AT THE SIGN OF THE BLACK HORSE: lock up your pension

AN IRRITATING law is delaying the directors of Lloyds bank from finally carving up the Trustee Savings Bank, which Lloyds owns.

In March last year the *Eye* (920) told the unsavoury story of how TSB, once a popular and thriving bank owned by its depositors, was privatised and gutted.

Like other formerly mutually-owned organisations — the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, for instance, or the Agricultural Mortgage Corporation — TSB has been swallowed by Lloyds which is keen to close branches and flog off the properties. But an ancient law insists that bank mergers must be approved by parliament.

There seemed to be no real problem for Lloyds bank with its extensive parliamentary contacts. The necessary bill was introduced in the House of Lords. But to Lloyds' horror a number of peers objected. The bill was blocked. Then it was blocked in the Commons. It had to be debated. Lloyds persuaded Eric Illsley, the football-loving Labour MP for Barnsley Central, to introduce their bill on 20 April.

Opposition to the bill came from an "action group" representing pensioners, present and future, in the old Hill Samuel merchant bank, which was bought by TSB in a disastrous take-over. The action group protests about the shabby treatment of pensioners while TSB enjoys a pensions holiday. Mr Gerald Howarth, the very right-wing MP for Aldershot, compared the treatment of one pensioner who was told to go to the bank's benevolent fund to help her pay for her hearing aid with the £650,000 lobbed out last year to former director Hugh Friedburgh.

Another Tory MP, Peter Brooke, started by listing his extensive connections with Lloyds/TSB but then exposed a "gap in the briefing" given to Eric Illsley and demanded "a sense of transparency and perception that people are being fairly treated". The bill goes to committee with the bank very much on the defensive.

PS: The chairman of the action group fighting for the pensioners is former Hill Samuel executive Sir Robert Clark, whom was described in the debate as "not a man to be taken lightly". This generous view of Mr Clark was shared by the late Robert Maxwell, whom Clark served faithfully for many years. Clark was a director of Mirror Group Newspapers after Maxwell floated it in 1991, and sat on the board during all those anxious months when £400m vanished from the *Mirror's* pension fund together with £100m of *Mirror* profits.

PPS: Sir Nicholas "Goodies" Goodison, a Lloyds TSB director, "exercised" 780,000 share options last year, at a profit of £5.2m.

Making rupees

Sir Ian Percival

■ ONE British lawyer who did not take part in the Global March Against Child Labour on 4 May was Robert Percival, son of the late Sir Ian Percival, the former Tory solicitor-general.

For many years Sir Ian was the sole trustee of the Bhopal Trust, set up in 1992 for the victims of the gas leak in the Indian city of Bhopal which killed and incapacitated thousands of people.

Before he joined Thatcher's government, Sir Ian had worked for the American law firm Sidley and Austin, which represented Union Carbide, the multinational company responsible for the leak. The trust was set up by Union Carbide from the proceeds of the sale of its Indian subsidiary. In response to a demand from the Indian government to provide medical facilities for the survivors of the disaster, the trust financed and supervised the building of a new 200-bed hospital in Bhopal. The trust and the hospital have been widely criticised in India by survivors and their medical teams. They argue that the money would have been much better spent on clinical care and medical supplies rather than on a showpiece hospital which will probably never even be visited by most survivors.

On 7 March the problems of the trust were compounded by a grim letter to Sir Ian from the deputy labour commissioner of Bhopal. He revealed that an inspection had found 14 workers at the hospital who were under age: ie, under 14. One of the children was only nine years old. The letter told Sir Ian that his trust had broken the law and ordered him to deposit 280,000 rupees (about $7000) with the Child Labour Rehabilitation and Welfare Fund. Shortly before he died last month, Sir Ian nominated his son Robert as his successor as sole trustee of the Bhopal Trust. Robert Percival is a barrister in the London chambers run for many years by his father.

Death and the Salesmen

■ TAKE care you don't lightly criticise the vast American funeral company SCI, Service Corporation International. You might get a letter from their solicitors.

SCI was the subject of two *World in Action* programmes in January which exposed high-pressure sales techniques for flogging "advance plan" funeral services to old and vulnerable people. Some sales staff conveniently forgot to tell their clients of their cheaper services. Another practice was the offer of "sweeteners" to hospital staff who recommend SCI. In one case, a hospital worker had been offered £500. Asked about this, the executive director of SCI in Britain, Mr Graham Barber, apologised and said the "extremely able young man" responsible had been switched to another section. The extremely able young man was Matthew Barber, Graham's son.

One result of the programme was a long letter from SCI's London solicitors, Olswang, to the Society for Allied and Independent Funeral Directors. "We are," warned Olswang, "currently advising our clients with regard to the procedures by which they should seek redress from Granada Television whether it be through the courts or the Broadcasting Standards Commission." It went on: "We would strongly advise you not to follow up last night's programme with a further press release of the type you issued last week. We have advised our clients that your press release is highly defamatory of them" and was "redolent with malice".

The society replied through its Glasgow solicitors McLure Naismith with a polite version of the historic reply given by *Private Eye* in 1970 in the case of Arkell v Pressdram ("fuck off"). Since then, Olswang and its clients have been uncharacteristically silent. Asked by the *Eye* if it had had notice of a writ for libel or a complaint to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, a senior Granada executive replied jauntily: "Not a dicky bird."

Meanwhile SCI has continued to gobble up the British funeral market. In many towns it owns all the established undertakers, who retain their original names. In Wisbech, for instance, if your relative dies you can go to W. Bailey and Son. If you don't like them, you can try W. and W.G. West, or there's a third choice: Cowlings Funeral Directors. The level of competition between the firms is affected by the fact that all three undertakers are owned by SCI.

The same monopoly extends to many other towns: Kingston-upon-Thames for instance. SCI, which started in Britain in 1994, now conducts about 85,000 funerals a year. It owns 560 funeral parlours and 15 crematoria. More and more services are falling into their lap. Central Middlesex Hospital Trust, for instance, recently contracted out its hospital bereavement services to SCI.

An unusual boost to this new monopoly has come from the well-known charity Age Concern. Last year the charity agreed to take a stake in Advance Planning Ltd, 75 percent of which is owned by SCI, 25 percent by Age Concern. The company offers a scheme for paying for funerals in advance. Debbie Shillings, product manager for Age Concern Enterprises, wrote recently that the funeral plan is "competitively priced" and "offers choice to people". She explained that Age Concern had teamed up with SCI so that "customers would be guaranteed a high level of care, attention and overall quality service in keeping with the ethos of the charity". Moreover, following the *World in Action* programmes, "Age Concern has been totally reassured by SCI that it is currently reviewing all of its operations to ensure that its activities are without question totally correct and transparent."

GRAHAM BARBER: British boss of SCI

The level of choice offered does not seem to have satisfied two old people in Derby, both on oxygen masks, who recently paid for their funerals in advance on Age Concern's recommendation only to discover that they must use an SCI-owned undertaker, of which there isn't one in Derby.

Last December Age Concern engaged on what it called a "direct mail campaign" to recommend the SCI funeral plan. The database company it used provided out-of-date information. The embarrassing result, in Age Concern's own words, was that "Age Concern Enterprises has mailed some customers that are now deceased."

All the signs are that the advance funeral plan has greatly helped the fortunes of Age Concern. In 1996-97 the charity's income went up from £20m to £28m. The charity's financial review reported: "This was principally due to the success of our commercial activities which contributes £11.7m compared to £6m in the previous year." At least some of this rapid growth can be attributed to the partnership with SCI and their entry into the expanding market of the American (and now British) way of death.

PREY OF THE JACKAL

THE *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* constantly complain that IRA murderers of Royal Ulster Constabulary policemen might be set free under the peace process. But neither newspaper has yet complained about the murder of an RUC officer by the RUC in collusion with a loyalist hitman, who is still at large.

The *Telegraph*'s double-page spread of 22 April was illustrated by pictures of most of the 299 policemen murdered during the Northern Ireland troubles. Most of them were killed by the IRA. An exception was Sgt Joe Campbell, who was shot dead outside the police station at the small town of Cushendall in February 1977.

Sgt Campbell was one of the very few Catholic officers in the RUC. His killer, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, is "unknown". In fact, as the *Eye* reported five years ago, and as a book published this month confirms, the gang which killed Campbell has been known very well to the RUC for 18 years. At least two of its members were RUC officers.

When he was murdered, Sgt Campbell was engaged in a long-term inquiry into racketeering and terrorism in his area. His reports suggested that the culprits were Protestant paramilitaries acting in concert with the police and security services.

Two months after Campbell's murder, William Strathearn, a popular Catholic chemist at Ahoghill, near Balymena, was shot dead late at night outside his shop after being asked to get medicine for a sick child. Three years later, two RUC officers at Balymena, Sgt John Weir and Constable William McCaughey, were convicted of the chemist's murder. They named the man who pulled the trigger as a notorious loyalist assassin known as the Jackal. They also confessed to playing a subsidiary part in the murder of their colleague Sgt Campbell, and again named the Jackal as the man who pulled the trigger.

Though Weir and McCaughey were jailed for life, no one has been convicted of the policeman's murder and the Jackal has not even been charged. As the *Eye* reported in July 1993, the Jackal "has continued murdering people ever since to the profound indifference of the authorities".

The Committee — Political Assassination in Northern Ireland by television producer Sean McPhilemy, published on 4 May in the United States by Roberts Rinehart, names

JOE CAMPBELL: RUC man killed by RUC

the Jackal and quotes a statement by former British army intelligence officer Fred Holroyd, as follows: "It is my considered view that the Jackal was a paid informer and agent of the RUC personally run by a sergeant of my acquaintance in Portadown special branch office."

McPhilemy's programme, *The Committee*, was broadcast in 1991 on Channel Four. The RUC demanded to know the source of McPhilemy's information. Channel Four refused and was fined £75,000 for contempt of court.

PS: The Jackal is dying of lung cancer. There are very many important people in the police and security services who are hoping against hope that he will not be tempted into any death-bed confession.

MARKS & SHARKS

■ MANAGERS at Marks & Spencer are celebrating their dubious libel victory over Granada TV by making sure their workers know who's boss.

Sylvester Boyne, 43, a disabled shelf-stacker in M&S's store in Walworth Road, south London, was summarily sacked and frogmarched from the store for "gross misconduct". His offence was to eat a single grape from waste fruit, long past its sell-by date, which had been returned to the warehouse.

PS: At last year's annual general meeting M&S shareholders approved an executive share option scheme which poured millions of pounds into the directors' pockets.

PIRC, the corporate governance watchdog, advised shareholders to vote against the scheme on the grounds that it was far too generous to the directors, carried no risk and in some cases even broke the Greenbury code on such matters.

The code was drawn up by a committee headed by Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman of Marks & Spencer.

High Principals

THE STICKLER OF WAKEFIELD

■ JOHN MUSKETT, principal of Wakefield College, Yorks, fell ill during a recent industrial tribunal case about the sacking of three lecturers last year. He was off on full pay when the unanimous decision was announced on 27 April — that the three had been unfairly dismissed.

The result is catastrophic for the college, which in a mass cull last summer sacked 53 staff, including the chairman, secretary and 13 out of 15 committee members of the lecturers' union. The sackings were the climax to a long period of "overhaul" instituted by Mr Muskett after "incorporation" (privatisation) of the college in 1993. So shocked were college managers by widespread rage and dismay at the sackings that they offered lecturers a free course in "grief counselling" (the offer was firmly declined).

MR MUSKETT

The tribunal's 21-page "extended reasons" for the decision make sad reading for the college managers, who are criticised again and again for not properly consulting the sacked individuals or their trade unions; not providing crucial information; and for giving the impression that they were sacking lecturers for reasons which had nothing to do with their abilities.

Steve Butler, the college's personnel director, had a specially hard time at the tribunal. At first he pretended that people were sacked after individual assessments were made of their performance as lecturers. When the computer records suggested that the "assessments" were made on quite different criteria — namely the faculties the lecturers worked in and the strength of the trade union in them — Butler was recalled. His performance was not impressive. The tribunal concluded: "His evidence early in the hearings conflicted almost entirely with the evidence he subsequently gave at a later date... His explanation subsequently to the tribunal when he was recalled cannot be accepted."

The decision opens the door to at least 50 other similar cases. Compensation for the three has yet to be decided, but even if it is pitched very low, the college is unlikely to see any change from a quarter of a million pounds. Add to that the cost of Addleshaw Booth, the most expensive solicitors in Leeds, whose work was extended by the college management's futile allegation, unsupported by evidence, that the tribunal members were biased in favour of the applicants.

Then there is the bill from the £105-a-night Marriott hotel, Leeds, where the management team regularly put itself up during the hearings. Staying in nice hotels is a weakness of Wakefield college managers. They were most upset in November 1994 when lecturers refused to take part in "residential bonding exercises" at the well-appointed £85-a-day Cedar Court Hotel, Wakefield, where the manager, John Horvass, was a governor of the college.

Governors general

■ TWO questions have come into the *Eye* about the last issue's piece on Wirral Metropolitan College.

1 Why do the Lib Dems, alone on Wirral council, support principal Jenny Shackleton's decision to close the college site at Carlett Park?

Answer: we have no idea. You should ask Gordon Lindsay, former leader and current Lib Dem councillor, who is also chairman of the college governors.

2 Why does the *Wirral News* not devote as much as its rival, the *Wirral Globe*, to college affairs?

Answer: we have no idea. You should ask the *Wirral News* editor who is a governor of the college.

Railtrack Rob

■ SIR Derek Roberts, provost of University College, London, is a leading member of the Russell Group, the organisation of "elite" universities which campaigns for students to pay higher fees.

Higher fees are very much in Sir Derek's line. He is the third highest paid university boss in the country, on £144,709, which he tops up with £15,000 as a non-executive director of Railtrack.

He heads up the committee responsible for railway safety, which came in for such a terrible bashing in the recently-leaked Railtrack internal inquiry.

You can write to Paul Foot at Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

TREASURY minister Geoffrey Robinson may have ridden out the storm over his tax-free offshore earner, but there are still several potentially embarrassing unanswered questions surrounding his financial affairs.

One concerns his considerable generosity towards premiership club Coventry City, in which the Guernsey Family Robinson's Orion Trust acquired a near one-third stake. For it has emerged that the £5m Robinson is said to have provided to Coventry City has been loaned for at least five years: not only interest free, but unsecured — when other lenders to the lossmaking club have insisted on both interest and security.

Tax experts question why Robinson should make such a generous gesture when it is open to the Inland Revenue to make him pay tax on receiving a notional interest payment because of his potential benefit from the club's use of the money.

In February 1996 it was disclosed that Robinson, a Coventry MP and Sky Blues fan, had provided £5m for the club to buy new players. Repayment was said to rely on profits from future transfer fees for the players acquired with the money. Robinson and the club declined to provide any further information about this remarkable transaction. But as a millionaire it was seen that such generosity was well within the Labour MP's means. Indeed the word in Coventry was that the cheque was signed by Robinson, who became a director of the club the following month.

However, three months after the £5m injection was disclosed, Orion Trust, at Robinson's suggestion, acquired its first shares in the club — buying a 26 percent holding for £1,242,000 from the offshore interests of chairman Bryan Richardson. It seems hardly likely that Robinson would have agreed to invest such a large amount without a stake in the club's future profitability.

But if Robinson put up the £5m, why did he not take up the shares? One answer could of course be that this way any profit could be tax-free. However, this may have been made more difficult but not impossible by the latest finance bill. This makes taxable capital gains by trusts like Orion which are set up by non-residents such as Robinson's Belgian benefactor, the late Joska Bourgeois. Another answer could be that the £5m came either directly or indirectly from Orion Trust.

In any event there clearly was a deal between Robinson and Richardson, because in June last year Orion Trust, having acquired another 19 percent of the Coventry shares very cheaply from anti-Richardson shareholder Derrick Robbins, transferred for a nominal price enough shares back to the Richardson offshore interests to leave them and Orion with 31 percent apiece.

This equality was also assisted by Orion selling a 10 percent stake to merchant banker Derek Higgs for a £187,000 tax-free profit. This deal would appear to be related to the fact that in 1995 a Higgs family charity had invested up to £2.5m in a debenture issue made by the club. But unlike the larger Robinson loan, this was not only secured but paid interest at 5 percent. As a registered charity it would have required both conditions.

The need for security has recently been emphasised by the club borrowing £10m from Midland Bank. It previously owed the Co-Operative Bank £5m. All of which makes Robinson's largesse even more remarkable.

This is especially so as tax experts point out that because of his role as a director (he resigned after becoming a minister but his longtime aide Brenda Price replaced him) and a potential beneficiary of the Orion Trust, the Revenue could claim he stood to benefit from the "soft" loan and the savings made by the club from not having to pay interest. In such circumstances the Revenue calculate a notional interest rate which would normally have been payable on the "soft" loan. This could produce a tax bill of £160,000 to £200,000 at 40 percent on interest of £400,000 to £500,000 a year for five years which Robinson had never received. Now that's generous!

Tax experts also suggest that if such a "soft" loan were made by Robinson for the benefit of the shareholders in Coventry City such as Orion Trust, this could make him a potential settlor of the trust, by providing a benefit, and so "taint" its non-resident tax-free status.

The questions therefore raised are why should Robinson be so generous as to provide an interest free loan that would result in a large tax bill, and how did he fund such a generous gesture? Surely not by borrowing, as the interest charge would be higher than the notional interest he was not receiving. Perhaps he had £5m on deposit on which he was prepared to forego any interest. If not, was the £5m one of the tax-free distributions Robinson has admitted receiving from the trust before the election, but which the minister has declined to detail? Such gifts can be received tax-free, but any subsequent income is taxable.

Or is it possible that the £5m was provided by Orion Trust as part of the deal suggested by Robinson in which it became a major Coventry City shareholder? If so this could explain why no interest was charged and no tax liability would then fall on Robinson over the "soft" loan. Orion pays no UK tax. But if so, it makes the trustees look even less independent: why should independent trustees risk so much money unsecured and income-free unless the beneficiaries wanted it?

SOURCES in Sweden suggest that arrest warrants will shortly be issued for Lord Moyne and his associate Lindsay Smallbone over the theft of almost £50m from investment company Trustor.

Swedish prosecutor Bo Skarinder is then expected to apply for the two former Trustor directors to be extradited from Britain. Moyne, aka Jonathan Guinness, and Smallbone are already the subject of civil proceedings in Britain by Trustor. A high court Mareva order has frozen Moyne's assets.

Moyne and Smallbone are expected to be charged with their Swedish accomplices, Thomas Jisander and Peter Mattsson, who helped spirit away Trustor's money into bank accounts in Gibraltar, Holland and Luxembourg. The architect of the fraud, Joachim Posener, is suspected of fleeing to Israel. The Serious Farce Office, while agreeing offences were committed here (the Trustor money disappeared after it was moved to a Barclays account in London), have encouraged Skarinder to prosecute Moyne and Smallbone rather than bring a case in Britain.

"One day, son, all this will be in your wife's name"

So the stage is likely to be set for a lengthy extradition battle either here or in Ireland should Moyne decide to stay there to avoid risking arrest on his visits to London. Moyne has volunteered to return to Sweden to testify as a witness about how he was duped by Posener & Co. But Skarinder has rejected his kind offer as the evidence suggests Moyne was well aware of what happened to Trustor's money and may have benefited himself to the tune of up to £1m.

VIRGIN's relentless self-publicist Richard Branson will soon be testing his popularity in the City with the planned Virgin Rail flotation and possibly that of the more attractive Virgin Travel, which includes his Virgin Atlantic airline.

A key element of the Branson hype is Virgin's squeaky-clean image. So it is more than a little surprising to find Mr Clean employing in a senior post a man who has been the target of disciplinary action by securities regulators. The executive is American Jonathan Ornstein, who runs Virgin Express, Branson's short-haul airline based in Belgium. Before joining the airline business in the United States, Ornstein had been a stockbroker with Prudential-Bache during 1985-87. In 1991 and 1992 Ornstein was found guilty of unauthorised trading in customers' option accounts by the National Association of Securities Dealers and the American Stock Exchange, in breach of their rules and US law. He was fined $30,000 and signed a consent decree in 1993 accepting a three-year ban by the ASE.

Ornstein's problem may have played a role in his exit as a director of Continental Airlines in November 1995. It had not been disclosed to Continental shareholders or those in Mesa Air where Ornstein had previously been from 1989. However, the Continental chairman denied this was Ornstein's reason for leaving. He joined what became Virgin Express soon aftewards. Clearly the omission was not made a third time. The Virgin Express prospectus last year discloses the fine and ban.

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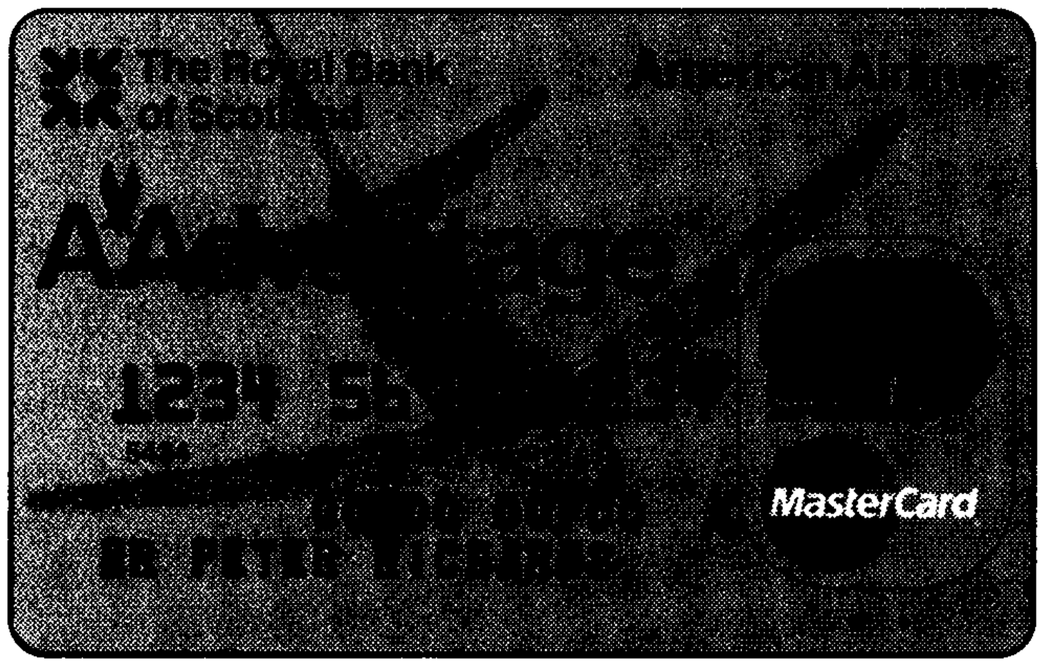

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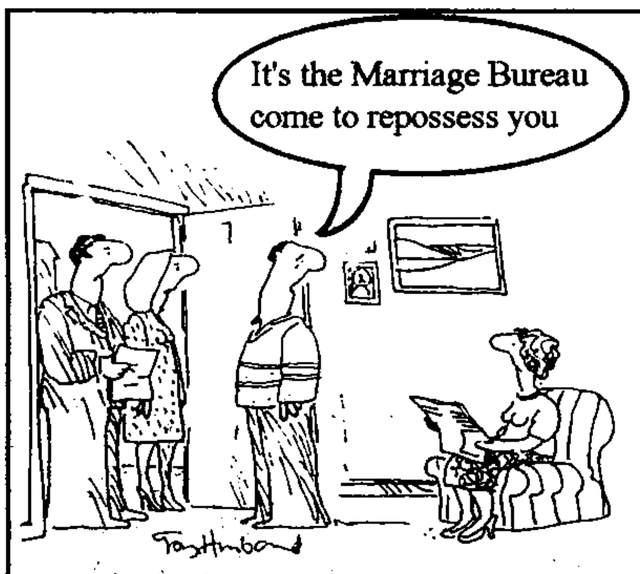

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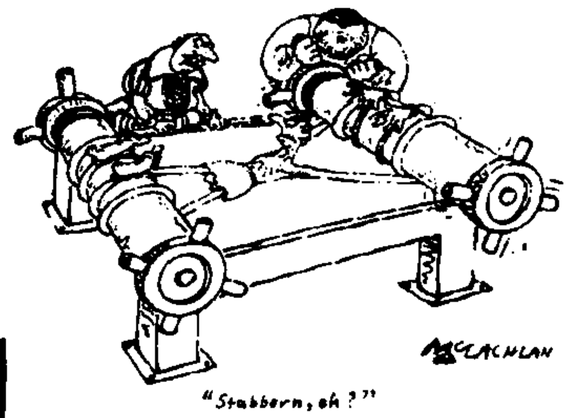

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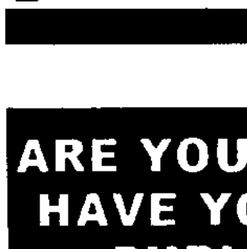

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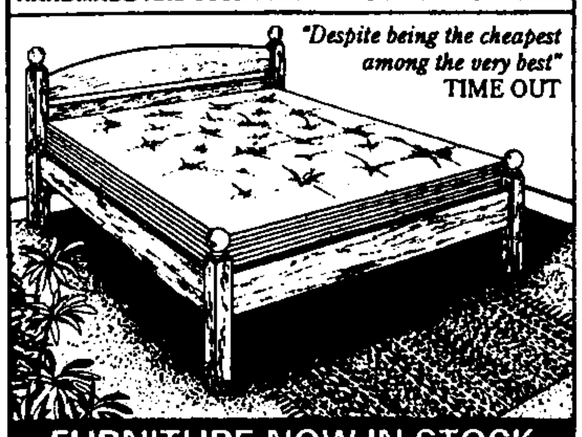

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No goodbyes, Radio 4 controller, James Boyle decreed. Rarely, however, have on-air farewells been more emotional than that given by Laurie Taylor as the Afternoon Shift signed off for the last time. Taylor sounded close to tears as he thanked listeners and then, taking a deep breath, whispered the G-WORD!

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JON – GIRAVARU WAS JUST the beginning! Missing you loads – can't wait to marry you. I love you. SHAZU.

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SPEECHWRITING by Mitch Murray – see page 31.

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HEDONISM – parties, clubnights, holidays. Decadent, uninhibited, exhibitionist, fun-loving party animals. Singles, couples. S.a.e. PO Box 153, Greenford, UB6 8LY. 0181 575 2052.

ATTACHED? Seeking romance? LOVING LINKS is Europe's leading quality discreet dating service. Call DAVID for a friendly chat on 0181 962 6300/0171 4607486. Featured on TV, Radio and National/Intl Press. www.lovinglinks.co.uk

ADDITIONS – nationwide newsletter – Attached? Yet need a friend? – 0181 905 3304, 0181 958 9657 – total discretion assured. Featured on ITV, American TV, BBC, Radios 4/5. Established 1992.

FIND HER IN RUSSIA.
Correspondence/Holidays.
CLUB RUSSIA, Bangor, LL57 2HF.
Tel: 01248 355640.
Fax: 01248 371711.

CONTACT MAG for adults: over 900 photos. APPROVAL copy from: MATCHMAKER, (S.76), Chorley, PR7 4BSS. Or ring: 01257 480155 (24 hours).

THAI CONNECTION – established 9 years. Over 400 marriages. WAIA approved. Free colour brochure: 01582 481725.

PERSON TO PERSON
– best singles magazine
for friends/partners, U.K.
or overseas.
Free details (Dept PE/8)
P.O. Box 4, Goring-on-Thames,
RG8 9DN.

EVENTS/CONTACTS/PARTIES for broadminded, uninhibited singles and couples. CLUB APHRODITE – PO Box 2097 Luton, LU3 2HR. Telephone: 01582 750947.

FILIPINO ORIENTAL ANGLO social club – UK introductions/parties/events. Martin/Marlene – 01493 308514/300063.

BEAUTIFUL THAI LADIES – colour brochure SIAM INTRODUCTIONS – 01689 860880.

YOUNG LADIES worldwide seeks penpals, friends, lifemates. Free details, photos! HERMES, Box 610188/S, 10922 Berlin, Germany. Fax: 0049 30 25299775.

ASIAN/EUROPEAN marriage – introduction guaranteed. SUMAN MARRIAGE BUREAU, established 1972. Telephone 0181 574 4867.

AstroFree – 0500 820283.

MARGARET'S SPECIAL Pen Club – make new friends today UK & overseas. SAE details: PO Box 1, Prestwick, Ayrshire KA9 1RJ. Est. 1986.

EYE LOVE

BALDY, BEARDY, married intellectual, 55 (what a turn-off, but do read on) seeks seriously clever female, attached or otherwise, for seriously pleasurable afternoons in London. Your looks are unimportant, but your body must be as adventurous as your mind. Box 2648.

IRISH MALE MID 40 seeks attractive, good-looking female who likes to travel and has interest in equine world, for sincere relationship. Ladies, you will not be disappointed. Please reply with photo and phone number. Box 1849.

CREATIVE CHIC black woman would love to meet married gentleman of means for a one-to-one relationship. Caring but without strings. Box 0950.

WANTED. REAL MAN + style, education, building capability + cash. Slim, fit woman, (48), S. Welsh borders needs partner for fun/project. Box 1050.

PRIEST SEEKS WOMAN for mutual defrocking. Box 2650.

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MALE, 48, 12 STONE, 6ft – seeks discreet female 40+ for friendship, possibly affair. Anglia. For photo write Box 1350.

BRIGHT, PERSONABLE professional guy, 42, seeks pretty girl, slender of ankle and ample of bosom, for heady cocktail of culture, clubbing and shenanigans. London. Box 1250.

WILLOWY, SPIRITED, 30-something professional, fit female seeks similar male. Detailed letter and photo appreciated. Lancashire. Box 1450.

NO LONGER TURNING HEADS, not yet turning stomachs – Cheltenham based female, 40, seeks amiable, unattached male chum. Box 1550.

AMERICAN MALE, 48, with money, looking for bright, busty and beautiful girl in her 30's or 40's for fun during my frequent stops in London. Box 1650.

SUNNY, SPONTANEOUS female, 28, seeks adventurous male for summer fun. North East. Box 1750.

ATTACHED, BLACK GUY 38, 6'3" tall, intelligent, creative – seeks affectionate female for a discreet affair. Yorkshire. Box 1850.

GENTLEMAN BIKER, 48, seeks educated, mildly adventurous, vivacious, lady travelling companion for 2 weeks HARLEY cruise in Spain/France. Mix of camping/accommodation. Depart UK 19 May returning 2 June. GSOH crucial – 35-45 perhaps, not essential. Box 2050.

TEETOTAL, SMOKING, FEISTY petite, irritable, caucasian theatre-loving woman, 46, desires male, similar. No Tories, Football supporters. Box 1950.

SIKH FEMALE, 31 5'5", slim, attractive, professional, seeks caring professional Sikh male. 31-38. Box 1150.

LONELY EXPATRIATE, 44, seeks woman of any age for erotic correspondence. Photo appreciated. Box 2150.

SOLVENT, SINGLE, STRESSED company director, 29, needs beauty, 18-25 for summer trips to Indian Ocean, foreign visits and days in London. If you're fun, attractive and can help me unwind write with photo: Box 2250.

TALENTED, NON-CLASSABLE easy-going man 30-40 sought by similar lady. Send photo. Box 2350.

SENSITIVE ATTACHED MALE, early 50s, seeks similar lady, 30+ for discreet friendship. I prefer silk to denim but possibly forties vintage lady driver. Box 2450.

BUSY HERTS GIRL (45) needs long-term occasional lover to enjoy. Preferably unpossessive good talker, non-smoker. Box 2550.

40 ODD, KIND, QUESTING, sexy, educated, whimsical, labyrinthine mind-athletic body combo, enmeshed in expedient marriage, seeks female counterpart part for... Box 2750.

MANCHESTER WOMAN, 46, seeks man who can recognise, and be relaxed about, the absurdities inherent in living life in the late 1990s. Box 2850.

SINGLE MALE, 35, shy, intelligent, couch potato tendencies, seeks naughty and nice older woman. London. Box 2950.

MALE ABOUT 30, seeks to broaden social circle – theatre, cinema, pubs. London. Box 3050.

SINGLE, PROFESSIONAL male, 5'7", 32, nice looking, positive outlook, loves swimming, fitness followed by music and wine – seeks stylish, sporty, soulful female for fun and romance. N/E. Box 3150.

A Startling Memory Feat That You Can Do

How I learned the secret in one evening. It has helped me every day.

WHEN my old friend Richard Faulkner invited me to a dinner party at his house, I little thought it would be the direct means of doubling my salary in less than two years. Yet it was, and here is the way it all came about.

Towards the end of the evening things began to drag a bit as they often do at parties. Finally someone suggested the old idea of having everyone do a 'party-piece'. Some sang, others forced weird sounds out of the piano, recited, told stories and so on.

Then it came to Peter Brown's turn. He said he had a simple 'trick' which he hoped we would like. First he asked to be blindfolded. Those present were to call out 25 random numbers of three figures each, such as 161, 249, and so on. He asked me to list the numbers in order as they were called.

Peter then astounded everyone by repeating the entire list of 25 numbers backwards and forwards. Then he asked people to request numbers by their position in the list, such as the eighth number called, the fourth number and so on. Instantly he repeated back the correct number in the positions called. He did this with the entire list — over and over again without making a single mistake.

Then Peter asked someone to shuffle a deck of cards and call them out in order. Still blindfolded he instantly named the cards in their order backwards and forwards.

You may well imagine our amazement at Peter's remarkable feat. You naturally expect to see a thing of this sort on television or the stage. Even then you look upon it as a trick. But to see it done by an ordinary businessman, in plain view of everyone, blindfolded and under conditions which make trickery impossible, is astonishing to say the least.

* * * * *

On the way home that evening I asked Peter Brown how it was done. He said there was really nothing to it — simply a memory feat, the key to which anyone could easily learn in one evening. The reason most people have bad memories is because they leave memory development to chance. Anyone could do what he had done and develop a good memory, he said, by following a few simple rules. And then he told me exactly how to do it. At the time, I little thought that evening would prove to be one of the most eventful in my life, but that's what it proved to be.

What Peter said I took to heart. In one evening I made remarkable strides towards improving my memory. In just a few days I learned to do exactly what he had done. At first I amused myself with my new-found ability by amazing people at parties. Everyone was talking about my 'memory feat', and I was showered with invitations to all sorts of occasions. People often asked me how they also could become more popular and successful. I used to tell them to learn my 'memory feat' — but this is apart from what I want to tell you now.

The most gratifying thing about the improvement of my memory was the remarkable way it helped me in business. I discovered that my memory training had literally put a razor edge on my mind. My thinking had become clearer, quicker, keener. I was fast acquiring that mental grasp and alertness I had so often admired in men who were spoken of as "brilliant" and "geniuses".

Then I noticed a marked improvement in my writing and conversational powers. Formerly my writing and talk was halting and disconnected. I could never think of things to say until the conversation was over. But now words and ideas leap into my mind. I never have to search for the right word, the right expression or the right thing to say. Instantly I find myself impressing people with bright, sparkling conversation.

It wasn't long before my new-found ability to remember attracted the attention of our Chairman. Since then my salary has increased dramatically.

I found that my ability to remember helped me tremendously in dealing with other people, particularly in meetings. The man who can back up his statements quickly with a string of definite facts and figures dominates every situation. Now it seems as though I never forget anything. I can instantly recall any fact I want to remember as if it were printed in black and white!

* * * * *

These are only a few of the hundreds of ways I have profited by my trained memory. No longer do I suffer the frustration of meeting people I know and not being able to recall their names. The moment I see someone I have met before a name leaps into my mind, together with a string of personal facts. Now I find it easy to recall everything I read. I can now master a subject in considerably less time than before. Price lists, reports, quotations, data of all kinds. I can recall in detail almost at will. I rarely make a mistake.

What's more, I can now do my day's work quicker and with much less effort than before.

What Peter told me that eventful evening was this: "Send for details of Dr. Bruno Furst's Memory Course." I did. That was my first step in learning to do all the remarkable things I have told you about. In fact, I was so impressed that I got permission to publish Dr. Furst's Course myself.

My advice to you now is don't wait another minute. Full details of Dr. Furst's remarkable Course are available free on request. You will be amazed how a powerful memory can improve your opportunities at work and in your social life. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose by posting the coupon today.

BOB HEAP

* * * * *

We, the publishers, have printed full details of Dr. Furst's unique memory training method in a free book entitled "Adventures in Memory". To obtain your free copy, simply post the coupon below. Or write to: Memory and Concentration Studies, (Dept. **PYM88**), FREEPOST 198, Manchester, M60 3DL.

Free Book Coupon

To: Memory and Concentration Studies, (Dept. PYM88), FREEPOST 198, Manchester, M60 3DL.

Please send me your free book "Adventures in Memory", with proof that Dr. Furst's method really works.

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If you want to improve your social life and are thinking about joining an Introduction Agency – it all comes down to . . .

Making the right choice

With over eight million single men and women in the UK* between the ages of 18 and 64 you might have thought it would be easy to meet someone special. However, people usually meet at work or within the confines of their social circle and even though you may have an interesting job and a busy social life a compatible partner could still be difficult to find.

In terms of cost, service and the number of people you can meet, Dateline provides real value for money – probably the best investment in your social life and future you could ever wish to make. Don't just take our word for it, just complete this free test questionnaire and see for yourself how our unique and successful formula could easily be put to work for you.

* Government Survey

You will receive in the strictest confidence, entirely free of charge and with no obligation: The name and brief description of someone who could be your perfect partner, our full colour brochure and a copy of our popular paperback book *"All You Need Is Love"*.

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for information call us on
01869 324 100
Fax: 01869 324 529

or visit our website
www.dateline.uk.com

1. Personal Information

Mr ❒ Mrs ❒ Miss ❒ Ms ❒

Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Post Code _____

I am seriously interested in meeting someone through Dateline.

Marital Status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Age: Height:

Occupation:

Religion:

Build: Slight ❒ Medium ❒ Large ❒

Attractiveness: Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

2. Education

Private / Public ❒ Grammar ❒
Comprehensive ❒ Sec. Modern ❒

O Levels / GCSE's ❒ A levels ❒
Further Education ❒
University / Professional Equivalent ❒
Technical Qualification ❒

3. Your Personality

(tick which traits closely describe you)

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious ❒ Practical
❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
❒ Shy ❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic ❒ Adventurous

4. Your Attitudes

(tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank)

❒ Do you involve yourself with community activities?
❒ Are you looking for one special relationship?
❒ Does your work make it difficult to meet new people?
❒ Do you want to extend your social life as well as finding a special relationship?
❒ Do you devote a lot of time to your social life?

5. Your interests

(sections 5. and 6. Please tick for a like, cross for dislike or leave blank for no preference.)

❒ Wining/Dining ❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs ❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Astrology
❒ Science/Tech ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Countryside

6. Details of your ideal partner

Minimum age: Maximum age:

Height: min. max. Don't mind ❒

Marital status:

Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒
Don't mind ❒

Build: Slight ❒ Medium ❒ Large ❒

Attractiveness: Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

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